





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

GIFT OF

Dr. Blanche C. Fromm



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

The Works of George Eliot

P O E M S

VOL. I.

ILLUSTRATED CABINET EDITION



Fedalma.

Photo-Etching. — From Painting by George Fuller.

Illustrated Cabinet Edition

POEMS

BY

GEORGE ELIOT

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.



BOSTON

DANA ESTES & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

PK

To My Dear

—EVERY DAY DEARER—

HUSBAND.

762735

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
GEORGE ELIOT AS A POET	1
EXTRACTS FROM GEORGE ELIOT'S LIFE	15
THE SPANISH GYPSY. BOOK I.	25
THE SPANISH GYPSY. BOOK II.	148
THE SPANISH GYPSY. BOOK III.	196

List of Illustrations.

VOL. I.

FEDALMA	<i>Frontispiece</i>
“ A figure lithe, all white and saffron robed, Flashed right across the circle ”	<i>Page 70</i>
“ Fedalma entered, cast away the cloud Of serge and linen, and, outbeaming bright, Advanced a pace towards Silva ”	89
“ My father . . . comes . . . my father ”	125
“ Ay, 't is a sword That parts the Spanish noble and the true Ziucala	232

GEORGE ELIOT AS A POET.

(From the *Contemporary Review*, vol. viii. p. 397.)

As if a strong, delightful water that we knew only as a river appeared in the character of a fountain; as if one whom we had wondered at as a good walker or inexhaustible pedestrian, began to dance; as if Mr. Bright, in the middle of a public meeting, were to oblige the company with a song, — no, no, not like that exactly, but like something quite new, — is the appearance of George Eliot in the character of a poet. “The Spanish Gypsy,” a poem in five books, originally written, as a prefatory note informs us, in the winter of 1864–65, and, after a visit to Spain in 1867, re-written and amplified, is before us. It is a great volume of three hundred and fifty octavo pages; and the first thing which strikes the reader is, that it is a good deal longer than he expected it would be. This is bad, to begin with. What right has anybody to make a poem longer than one expected? The next thing that strikes one is, — at all events, the next thing that struck me was, as I very hastily turned over the book, — that the fine *largo* of the author’s manner, continued through so many pages, was a very little burdensome in its effect. That may come of the specific levity of my taste; but it is as well to be quite frank.

Dr. Holmes, of Boston, says — I fear I am repeating myself, as he did with his illustration of the alighting luma — that a poem is like a violin in the respect that it needs to be kept and used a good deal before you know what music there is in it. If that is so, what may here be said of George Eliot's poem will have but little value; for the book has only been in my hand a few days, at a time when my preoccupation is great, and reading is painful to me. But, in the first place, I do really think my hasty impressions are correct in this case; and, in the second, I shall find some way of returning to the book, if after very often-repeated readings (according to my habit) I alter any of my opinions.

In the *Argosy* I once gave reasons for looking forward with deep interest to anything George Eliot might do in the shape of poetry, and also hinted the direction in which her risk of greater or less failure appeared to me to lie. "You can never reckon up these high-strung natures, ever ready to be re-impregnated," or tell what surprises they may have in store for you. It had often struck me that there was a vein of poetic *expression* in the writing of George Eliot, of which a hundred instances might have been given. But the question of questions remained: Had she such a power, not to say necessity, of spontaneous expression in verse, that when we saw her poetry we should inevitably say, as Milton said of himself, that the expression in verse was the right-hand speech, that in prose the left-hand speech? How fine are the shades or gradations of quality in this respect, can be little understood by those who have not, by instinct or otherwise, fed, so to speak, on verse. For example, we all know that Wordsworth often wrote, in the

printed form of verse, the most utterly detestable prose. Yet he could and did produce most exquisite verse. Again, a living poet of the school of Wordsworth, Mr. Henry Taylor, barely, or little better than barely, enables us to say of him that verse is his right-hand and prose his left. Still, after some little demur, we *are* able to say it; and we call him a poet.

It must not be supposed that this is by any means a matter of mere fluency, correctness, or ease of numbers. Macaulay wrote verses far superior in these particulars to many of Mr. Henry Taylor's and many of Wordsworth's. Yet verse was, unequivocally, Macaulay's left-hand; and after adolescence, few people can read his verse for poetry. If I were not unwilling to rouse the prejudice of (I fear!) most of my readers, I should here add Edgar Poe; and, indeed, I really cannot spare him as an illustration. He must have some queer hybrid place, all to himself (which it would take an essay to define); but though he may be said to have felt verse his right-hand medium of expression, some few of us hesitate to call him a poet. Not to complicate this matter, let us come at once to the point. What is it that in excellent verse differentiates¹ that which is poetry and that which is not? Not mere fluency, but unconscious fluency; in a word, simplicity. Whatever art may do for the poet, he must be a *simple* musician to begin with.

In looking rapidly over this poem of George Eliot's I have — let me confess it — I have been inclined to fear that this "note" of simplicity is wanting. And, in spite of an abundance of fine passages, I

¹ I have seen this word objected to as a scientific foppery; but in its form of *to difference*, the verb is a good old English verb.

fear, also, there is not the perfect fluency of use and wont. It has been maintained, under shelter of Elizabethan models, that you may do almost anything in dramatic blank verse, in the way of lengthening and shortening the line. I object to the doctrine, and maintain that the Elizabethan examples cited are, in many instances, mere bits of negligence; and, in others, roughnesses of workmanship belonging to the lusty youth of a new art. Blank verse means ten-syllable iambic lines. If there are deviations from this form, as there often are, and should be, they must be regulated deviations, not accidental intrusions of other forms. . . . The versification of "The Spanish Gypsy" often breaks out into the very highest excellence; but it too often wants spontaneity and simplicity.

As the same observation applies to the lyrics, one has little hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the primal peculiarity which distinguishes the singer from the sayer is either lacking in George Eliot or that its function has suffered from disuse. I still hesitate to say suffered irreparably, because I still think the orbit of a genius like George Eliot's incalculable. With such a noble ambition, and such immense resources, one may do almost anything. Thus, though I confess I *now* think it improbable that George Eliot will ever exhibit in a poem the true simplicity of the singer, and compel her readers to admit that her music is better than her speech, I hesitate, or well-nigh hesitate, in saying even so much as that. It is very pathetic that a noble ambition should come so near its mark and yet fail. Only what are we to do? The truth must be spoken.

Against the presumption raised by the bulk of

the writing must, in fairness, be set the evidence of particular passages, in which the author attains such high excellence that if one had seen those passages alone, there would have been no hesitation or doubt on the score of melody. A few of these, in some of which the reader will catch fine touches of Elizabethan inspiration, I will pick out of the mass.

Take, for an example, this description of Zarca:—

“He is of those
Who steal the keys from snoring Destiny
And make the prophets lie.”

And this:—

“My vagabonds are a seed more generous,
Quick as the serpent, loving as the hound,
And beautiful as disinherited gods.
They have a promised land beyond the sea.”

And this:—

“Spring afternoons, when delicate shadows fall
Pencilled upon the grass; high summer morns
When white light rains upon the quiet sea
And cornfields flush with ripeness.”

And this:—

“Present and silent and unchangeable
As a celestial portent.”

Lastly, the best lyric in the poem:—

“The world is great: the birds all fly from me,
The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
All out of reach: my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

“The world is great: I tried to mount the hill
Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
But it rose higher: little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.”

Finally, the intellectual groundwork, or outline, of the poem shows far too plainly under the colouring of passion and the movement of the story. Since "Silas Marner" we have had no book from George Eliot to which this criticism would not, in some degree, be applicable. There is not room here for any exhibition of all the recurring ideas of George Eliot's writings, but one in particular has been growing more and more prominent since "Silas Marner," and of which the first hint is in "The Mill on the Floss." "If the past is not to bind us," said Maggie Tulliver, in answer to the importunities of Stephen Guest, "what is?" In a noticeable and well-remembered review of Mr. Lecky's "History of Rationalism," George Eliot told us that the best part of our lives was made up of organized traditions (I quote from memory, but the meaning was plain). Putting these two things together, we get the intellectual ground-plan of "The Spanish Gypsy." Perhaps the illustrious author of the poem would resent the idea that any moral was intended to be conveyed by her recent writings; but, assuredly, this moral is thrust upon us everywhere, in a way which implies, if not intention, very eager belief.

Leaving the workmanship and the intellectual conception, or interwoven moral criticism, of the poem, and coming to the story, I am sure of only echoing what all the world will say when I call this in the highest degree poetic; and poetically dramatic, too. I must add, and with emphasis, that the story seems to me to gain, as a story, by this mode of presentation, — as I firmly believe "Romola" would have gained, if the question of perfect poetic expression could have been got over. In other words, although the manner of the novelist

too often obtrudes itself in "The Spanish Gypsy," the author has told the story more affectingly, and with much more of truthfulness and local colour and manner, than she would have done if she had been writing it as a novel. Compare, for example, what I think are among the very finest things George Eliot has ever done,—the scene between Juan the troubadour and the Gypsy girls, at the opening of Book III., and the scene in which Don Amador reads to the retainers of Don Silva from "Las Siete Partidas" the passage beginning, "Et esta gentileza aviene en tres maneras" (the critical reader who stumbles at the "et" must be informed that this is thirteenth-century Spanish),—compare these two scenes, I say, with the first scene in the barber's shop, and the scene of the Florentine joke, in "Romola," and note how very much the author gains by assuming the dramatic form. I have heard readers of much critical ability, and much poetic and dramatic instinct, too, complain that they did not see the force of those scenes in "Romola;" but it must be an incredibly dull person that misses the force of those scenes in "The Spanish Gypsy." The love-passages, also, are exquisitely beautiful; and in them again the author has gained by using the dramatic form. I dare to add that she has, however, lost by some of the (so to speak) "stage-directions." We don't want to be told how a man and woman of the type of Don Silva and Fedalma¹ look when they are saying certain things. We can feel pretty sure when the moment would be too

¹ I do not remember having ever seen this name before; it is an exquisitely musical word, and, I suppose, is intended to mean Faith of the Soul; or, more intelligibly to *some* people (not to be envied), Spiritual Fidelity.

sweet and solemn even for kissing. As Sam Slick said, "Natur' teaches that air."

The story of "The Spanish Gypsy" is simply this: Fedalma, a Zincala, is lost in her early childhood, and brought up by a Spanish duchess, Don Silva's mother. As she grows to womanhood Silva loves her, and she is on the point of marrying him when the narrative opens. But Fedalma's father, Zarca, a Gypsy Moses, Hiawatha, or both, devoted to the regeneration of his tribe, suddenly appears upon the scene and claims his daughter. Will she marry Don Silva, or go with her father and be the priestess of a new faith to the Zincali? She decides to accompany her father. Upon this Silva renounces his position as a Spanish noble and Christian knight and becomes a Zincalo. This implies the relinquishment of his post as commander of the town and fortress of Bedmár, which it is his duty to guard against the Moors; but he is not aware, at the time he takes the Gypsy oath, that Zarca is already in league with the Moors to take the fortress. Zarca and the Moors, however, succeed in investing the place, and some noble Spaniards, friends of Silva's, including his uncle, Father Isidor, are slain. Mad with remorse and rage, Silva stabs Zarca, but is allowed to go free. The poem closes with the departure of Silva to obtain absolution from the Pope, in order that he may recommence the career of a Christian knight, and the departure of Fedalma to begin, as best she may, the work bequeathed to her by her father, namely, the regeneration of the Zincali.

One thing is obvious on the face of this story,—that Silva was guilty, in so far as he was an apostate. But there will not be wanting readers who when

asking the question who was the cause of all the misery with which the narrative overflows, will say, Fedalma. It was all very well to say that her past bound her. But which past? When Zarca started up, she was pledged by her "past" to Silva, and she loved him. What Zarca imported into the situation was, as lawyers say, new matter. The morrow would have seen her married to Silva; and what *then*, if Zarca had appeared upon the stage with his Gypsy patriotism? All the future was dark to her, there was no reason whatever to believe that either she or Zarca would be able to regenerate the Gypsies; there was present actual proof that she was essential to Silva, life of his life, and the bond of his being. What right had she to forsake him? It is idle to discuss this, but since, as far as I can make out, there is distinct teaching in the poem, and that teaching is of no force unless Fedalma was, *beyond question*, right, it is perfectly fair and appropriate to suggest that there is room for question. It seems to me a little curious that George Eliot does not see that the same reason which made Sephardo, the astrologer, a son first and a Jew afterwards, would make Fedalma a betrothed woman first and a Zincala next.

But I do not dwell upon this point, because I look forward to another opportunity of dealing with what we are now entitled to assume is George Eliot's evangel, —

“. . . . that Supreme, the irreversible Past.”

Irreversible, no doubt, but — “Supreme!” The reader must not imagine that I am darting capriciously at a word here. Not at all. George Eliot has a very distinct meaning, which is very distinctly

affiliated to a certain mode of thought. To this mode of thought may be traced the astounding discords of her late writings, or rather the one astounding discord which runs through them.

In submitting to the world a poem, George Eliot is under one serious disadvantage. There are certain particulars in which she is not likely, in verse, to excel her own prose. Clear and profound conception, and emphatic, luminous, and affecting presentation of character, is one of them. The power of inventing dramatic situation is another. In these particulars "The Spanish Gypsy" falls behind nothing that this distinguished writer has done; though I do not myself feel that either Fedalma or Zarca is dramatically presented to us. Indeed, vivid as George Eliot's painting of character always is, and profoundly intelligent, I never thought it dramatic. Nor is it. Here, as in the other books of George Eliot, character is always most vividly described and analyzed; and what the people do is, of course, in exact accordance with what is described; but none of them reveal themselves without having had the advantage of some criticism. None of them, that is to say, reveal themselves by action only, or by action and speech only, unless the speech takes a critical form. Zarca is shadowy, and Fedalma shadowy. But Juan and Silva we understand well because they are criticised; and Isidor the prior, and Sephardo the Jew, we understand well, because their talk is criticism of a kind which only a certain order of mind could produce. Perhaps the finest portions of the poem lie in some of these critical or quasi-critical passages. Let us take "The Astrologer's Study":—

"A room high up in Abderahman's tower,
 A window open to the still warm eve,
 And the bright disk of royal Jupiter.
 Lamps burning low make little atmospheres
 Of light amid the dimness; here and there
 Show books and phials, stones and instruments.
 In carved dark-oaken chair, unpillowed, sleeps
 Right in the rays of Jupiter a small man,
 In skull-cap bordered close with crisp gray curls,
 And loose black gown showing a neck and breast
 Protected by a dim-green amulet;
 Pale-faced, with finest nostril wont to breathe
 Ethereal passion in a world of thought;
 Eyebrows jet-black and firm, yet delicate;
 Beard scant and grizzled; mouth shut firm, with curves
 So subtly turned to meanings exquisite,
 You seem to read them as you read a word
 Fall-vowelled, long descended, pregnant, — rich
 With legacies from long, laborious lives."

Juan's criticism of himself: —

"I can unleash my fancy if you wish
 And hunt for phantoms: shoot an airy guess
 And bring down airy likelihood, — some lie
 Masked cunningly to look like royal truth
 And cheat the shooter, while King Fact goes free,
 Or else some image of reality
 That doubt will handle and reject as false.
 Ask for conjecture, — I can thread the sky
 Like any swallow, but, if you insist
 On knowledge that would guide a pair of feet
 Right to Bedmár, across the Moorish bounds,
 A mule that dreams of stumbling over stones
 Is better stored."

And, assuredly, I must not omit the study of the character of Silva himself: —

"A man of high-wrought strain. fastidious
 In his acceptance, dreading all delight
 That speedy dies and turns to carrion:

His senses much exacting, deep instilled
 With keen imagination's difficult needs ; —
 Like strong-limbed monsters studded o'er with eyes,
 Their hunger checked by overwhelming vision,
 Or that fierce lion in symbolic dream
 Snatched from the ground by wings and new-endowed
 With a man's thought-propelled relenting heart.
 Silva was both the lion and the man ;
 First hesitating shrank, then fiercely sprang,
 Or having sprung, turned pallid at his deed
 And loosed the prize, paying his blood for naught.
 A nature half-transformed, with qualities
 That oft bewrayed each other, elements
 Not blent but struggling, breeding strange effects,
 Passing the reckoning of his friends or foes.
 Haughty and generous, grave and passionate ;
 With tidal moments of devoutest awe,
 Sinking anon to farthest ebb of doubt ;
 Deliberating ever, till the sting
 Of a recurrent ardour made him rush
 Right against reasons that himself had drilled
 And marshalled painfully. A spirit framed
 Too proudly special for obedience,
 Too subtly pondering for mastery :
 Born of a goddess with a mortal sire,
 Heir of flesh-fettered, weak divinity,
 Doom-gifted with long resonant consciousness
 And perilous heightening of the sentient soul.
 But look less curiously : life itself
 May not express us all, may leave the worst
 And the best too, like tunes in mechanism
 Never awaked. In various catalogues
 Objects stand variously."

There is only one living mind which could have given us poetico-psychological studies of human character like these. There is no comparison in range of faculty between such a mind and John Clare's. Is it not strange, and almost pathetic, that an uncultivated peasant could sing, and touch us with music, as no speech could ; and yet that a

highly cultivated mind like George Eliot's should almost overwhelm our judgment by the richness and volume of what it pours forth in the name of song; and yet that we are compelled to say the bird-note is missing?

MATTHEW BROWNE.

EXTRACTS FROM GEORGE ELIOT'S LIFE.

EDITED BY J. W. CROSS.

AMONG my wife's papers were four or five pages of manuscript headed "Notes on the Spanish Gypsy and Tragedy in General." There is no evidence as to the date at which this fragment was written, and it seems to have been left unfinished. But there was evidently some care to preserve it; and as I think she would not have objected to its presentation, I give it here exactly as it stands. It completes the history of the poem.

"The subject of 'The Spanish Gypsy' was originally suggested to me by a picture which hangs in the Scuola di' San Rocco at Venice, over the door of the large Sala containing Tintoretto's frescos. It is an Annunciation, said to be by Titian. Of course I had seen numerous pictures of this subject before; and the subject had always attracted me. But in this my second visit to the Scuola di' San Rocco, this small picture of Titian's, pointed out to me for the first time, brought a new train of thought. It occurred to me that here was a great dramatic motive of the same class as those used by the Greek dramatists, yet specifically differing from them. A young maiden, believing herself to be on the eve of the chief event of her life, —

marriage, — about to share in the ordinary lot of womanhood, full of young hope, has suddenly announced to her that she is chosen to fulfil a great destiny, entailing a terribly different experience from that of ordinary womanhood. She is chosen, not by any momentary arbitrariness, but as a result of foregoing hereditary conditions: she obeys. ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord.’ Here, I thought, is a subject grander than that of Iphigenia, and it has never been used. I came home with this in my mind, meaning to give the motive a clothing in some suitable set of historical and local conditions. My reflections brought me nothing that would serve me, except that moment in Spanish history when the struggle with the Moors was attaining its climax, and when there was the gypsy race present under such conditions as would enable me to get my heroine and the hereditary claim on her among the gypsies. I required the opposition of race to give the need for renouncing the expectation of marriage. I could not use the Jews or the Moors, because the facts of their history were too conspicuously opposed to the working out of my catastrophe. Meanwhile the subject had become more and more pregnant to me. I saw it might be taken as a symbol of the part which is played in the general human lot by hereditary conditions in the largest sense, and of the fact that what we call duty is entirely made up of such conditions; for even in cases of just antagonism to the narrow view of hereditary claims, the whole background of the particular struggle is made up of our inherited nature. Suppose for a moment that our conduct at great epochs was determined entirely by reflection, without the immediate intervention

of feeling, which supersedes reflection, our determination as to the right would consist in an adjustment of our individual needs to the dire necessities of our lot, partly as to our natural constitution, partly as sharers of life with our fellow-beings. Tragedy consists in the terrible difficulty of this adjustment, —

“ ‘The dire strife of poor Humanity’s afflicted will,
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny.’ ”

Looking at individual lots, I seemed to see in each the same story, wrought out with more or less of tragedy, and I determined the elements of my drama under the influence of these ideas.

“ In order to judge properly of the dramatic structure it must not be considered first in the light of doctrinal symbolism, but in the light of a tragedy representing some grand collision in the human lot. And it must be judged accordingly. A good tragic subject must represent a possible, sufficiently probable, not a common, action; and to be really tragic, it must represent irreparable collision between the individual and the general (in differing degrees of generality). It is the individual with whom we sympathize, and the general of which we recognize the irresistible power. The truth of this test will be seen by applying it to the greatest tragedies. The collision of Greek tragedy is often that between hereditary, entailed Nemesis and the peculiar individual lot, awakening our sympathy, of the particular man or woman whom the Nemesis is shown to grasp with terrific force. Sometimes, as in the *Oresticia*, there is the clashing of two irreconcilable requirements, — two duties, as we should say in these times. The mur-

der of the father must be avenged by the murder of the mother, which must again be avenged. These two tragic relations of the individual and general, and of two irreconcilable 'oughts,' may be — will be — seen to be almost always combined. The Greeks were not taking an artificial, entirely erroneous standpoint in their art, — a standpoint which disappeared altogether with their religion and their art. They had the same essential elements of life presented to them as we have, and their art symbolized these in grand schematic forms. The Prometheus represents the ineffectual struggle to redeem the small and miserable race of man, against the stronger adverse ordinances that govern the frame of things with a triumphant power. Coming to modern tragedies, what is it that makes Othello a great tragic subject? A story simply of a jealous husband is elevated into a most pathetic tragedy by the hereditary conditions of Othello's lot, which give him a subjective ground for distrust. Faust, Rigoletto ('Le Roi s'Amuse'), Brutus. It might be a reasonable ground of objection against the whole structure of 'The Spanish Gypsy,' if it were shown that the action is outrageously improbable, — lying outside all that can be congruously conceived of human actions. It is *not* a reasonable ground of objection that they would have done better to act otherwise, any more than it is a reasonable objection against the Iphigenia that Agamemnon would have done better not to sacrifice his daughter.

“As renunciations coming under the same great class, take the renunciation of marriage where marriage cannot take place without entailing misery on the children.

“ A tragedy has not to expound why the individual must give way to the general; it has to show that it is compelled to give way, — the tragedy consisting in the struggle involved, and often in the entirely calamitous issue in spite of a grand submission. Silva presents the tragedy of entire rebellion; Fedalma, of a grand submission, which is rendered vain by the effects of Silva's rebellion; Zarca, the struggle for a great end, rendered vain by the surrounding conditions of life.

“ Now, what is the fact about our individual lots? A woman, say, finds herself on the earth with an inherited organization: she may be lame, she may inherit a disease, or what is tantamount to a disease; she may be a negress, or have other marks of race repulsive in the community where she is born, etc. One may go on for a long while without reaching the limits of the commonest inherited misfortunes. It is almost a mockery to say to such human beings, ‘ Seek your own happiness.’ The utmost approach to well-being that can be made in such a case is through large resignation and acceptance of the inevitable, with as much effort to overcome any disadvantage as good sense will show to be attended with a likelihood of success. Any one may say, that is the dictate of mere rational reflection. But calm can in hardly any human organism be attained by rational reflection. Happily, we are not left to that. Love, pity, constituting sympathy, and generous joy with regard to the lot of our fellow-men comes in, — has been growing since the beginning, — enormously enhanced by wider vision of results, by an imagination actively interested in the lot of mankind generally; and these feelings become piety. — that

is, loving, willing submission and heroic Promethean effort towards high possibilities, which may result from our individual life.

“There is really no moral ‘sanction’ but this inward impulse. The will of God is the same thing as the will of other men, compelling us to work and avoid what they have seen to be harmful to social existence. Disjoined from any perceived good, the divine will is simply so much as we have ascertained of the facts of existence which compel obedience at our peril. Any other notion comes from the supposition of arbitrary revelation.

“That favourite view, expressed so often in Clough’s poems, of doing duty in blindness as to the result, is likely to deepen the substitution of egoistic yearnings for really moral impulses. We cannot be utterly blind to the results of duty, since that cannot be duty which is not already judged to be for human good. To say the contrary is to say that mankind have reached no inductions as to what is for their good or evil.

“The art which leaves the soul in despair is laming to the soul, and is denounced by the healthy sentiment of an active community. - The consolatory elements in ‘The Spanish Gypsy’ are derived from two convictions or sentiments which so conspicuously pervade it that they may be said to be its very warp, on which the whole action is woven. These are: (1) The importance of individual deeds; (2) The all-sufficiency of the soul’s passions in determining sympathetic action.

“In *Silva* is presented the claim of fidelity to social pledges; in *Fedalma*, the claim constituted by an hereditary lot less consciously shared.

“With regard to the supremacy of love: if it

were a fact without exception that man or woman never did renounce the joys of love, there could never have sprung up a notion that such renunciation could present itself as a duty. If no parents had ever cared for their children, how could parental affection have been reckoned among the elements of life? But what are the facts in relation to this matter? Will any one say that faithfulness to the marriage tie has never been regarded as a duty, in spite of the presence of the profoundest passion experienced after marriage? Is Guinevere's conduct the type of duty?"

THE SPANISH GYPSY.

POEMS OF GEORGE ELIOT.

THE SPANISH GYPSY.

BOOK I.

'TIS the warm South, where Europe spreads her
lands

Like fretted leaflets, breathing on the deep :
Broad-breasted Spain, leaning with equal love
(A calm earth-goddess crowned with corn and
vines)

On the Mid Sea that moans with memories,
And on the untravelled Ocean, whose vast tides
Pant dumbly passionate with dreams of youth.
This river, shadowed by the battlements
And gleaming silvery towards the northern sky,
Feeds the famed stream that waters Andalus
And loiters, amorous of the fragrant air,
By Córdoba and Seville to the bay
Fronting Algarva and the wandering flood
Of Guadiana. This deep mountain gorge
Slopes widening on the olive-pluméd plains
Of fair Granáda : one far-stretching arm
Points to Elvira, one to eastward heights
Of Alpujarras where the new-bathed Day
With oriflamme uplifted o'er the peaks
Saddens the breasts of northward looking snows

That loved the night, and soared with soaring stars ;
 Flashing the signals of his nearing swiftness
 From Almería's purple-shadowed bay
 On to the far-off rocks that gaze and glow, —
 On to Alhambra, strong and ruddy heart
 Of glorious Morisma, gasping now,
 A maiméd giant in his agony.

This town that dips its feet within the stream,
 And seems to sit a tower-crowned Cybele,
 Spreading her ample robe adown the rocks,
 Is rich Bedmár: 't was Moorish long ago,
 But now the Cross is sparkling on the Mosque,
 And bells make Catholic the trembling air.
 The fortress gleams in Spanish sunshine now
 ('Tis south a mile before the rays are Moorish), —
 Hereditary jewel, agraffe bright
 On all the many-titled privilege
 Of young Duke Silva. No Castilian knight
 That serves Queen Isabel has higher charge ;
 For near this frontier sits the Moorish king,
 Not Boabdil the waverer, who usurps
 A throne he trembles in, and fawning licks
 The feet of conquerors, but that fierce lion
 Grisly El Zagal, who has made his lair
 In Guadix' fort, and rushing thence with strength,
 Half his own fierceness, half the untainted heart
 Of mountain bands that fight for holiday,
 Wastes the fair lands that lie by Alcalá,
 Wreathing his horse's neck with Christian heads.

To keep the Christian frontier, — such high trust
 Is young Duke Silva's ; and the time is great.
 (What times are little ? To the sentinel
 That hour is regal when he mounts on guard.)
 The fifteenth century since the Man Divine

Taught and was hated in Capernaum
Is near its end, — is falling as a husk
Away from all the fruit its years have ripened.
The Moslem faith, now flickering like a torch
In a night struggle on this shore of Spain,
Glares, a broad column of advancing flame,
Along the Danube and Illyrian shore
Far into Italy, where eager monks,
Who watch in dreams and dream the while they
watch,

See Christ grow paler in the baleful light,
Crying again the cry of the forsaken.
But faith, the stronger for extremity,
Becomes prophetic, hears the far-off tread
Of western chivalry. sees downward sweep
The archangel Michael with the gleaming sword,
And listens for the shriek of hurrying fiends
Chased from their revels in God's sanctuary.
So trusts the monk, and lifts appealing eyes
To the high dome, the Church's firmament,
Where the blue light-pierced curtain, rolled away
Reveals the throne and Him who sits thereon.
So trust the men whose best hope for the world
Is ever that the world is near its end:
Impatient of the stars that keep their course
And make no pathway for the coming Judge.

But other futures stir the world's great heart.
The West now enters on the heritage
Won from the tombs of mighty ancestors,
The seeds, the gold, the gems, the silent harps
That lay deep buried with the memories
Of old renown.

No more, as once in sunny Avignon,
The poet-scholar spreads the Homeric page,

And gazes sadly, like the deaf at song ;
For now the old epic voices ring again
And vibrate with the beat and melody
Stirred by the warmth of old Ionian days.
The martyred sage, the Attic orator,
Immortally incarnate, like the gods,
In spiritual bodies, wingéd words
Holding a universe impalpable,
Find a new audience. Forevermore,
With grander resurrection than was feigned
Of Attila's fierce Huns, the soul of Greece
Conquers the bulk of Persia. The maimed form
Of calmly joyous beauty, marble-limbed,
Yet breathing with the thought that shaped its
 lips,
Looks mild reproach from out its opened grave
At creeds of terror ; and the vine-wreathed god
Rising, a stifled question from the silence,
Fronts the pierced Image with the crown of thorns.
The soul of man is widening towards the past :
No longer hanging at the breast of life
Feeding in blindness to his parentage, —
Quenching all wonder with Omnipotence,
Praising a name with indolent piety, —
He spells the record of his long descent,
More largely conscious of the life that was
And from the height that shows where morning
 shone
On far-off summits pale and gloomy now,
The horizon widens round him, and the west
Looks vast with untracked waves whereon his gaze
Follows the flight of the swift-vanished bird
That like the sunken sun is mirrored still
Upon the yearning soul within the eye.
And so in Córdoba through patient nights

Columbus watches, or he sails in dreams
 Between the setting stars and finds new day;
 Then wakes again to the old weary days,
 Girds on the cord and frock of pale Saint Francis,
 And like him zealous pleads with foolish men.
 " I ask but for a million maravedis :
 Give me three caravels to find a world,
 New shores, new realms, new soldiers for the
 Cross.

Son cosas grandes ! " Thus he pleads in vain ;
 Yet faints not utterly, but pleads anew,
 Thinking, " God means it, and has chosen me." "
 For this man is the pulse of all mankind
 Feeding an embryo future, offspring strange
 Of the fond Present, that with mother-prayers
 And mother-fancies looks for championship
 Of all her loved beliefs and old-world ways
 From that young Time she bears within her womb.
 The sacred places shall be purged again,
 The Turk converted, and the Holy Church,
 Like the mild Virgin with the outspread robe,
 Shall fold all tongues and nations lovingly.

But since God works by armies, who shall be
 The modern Cyrus ? Is it France most Christian,
 Who with his lilies and brocaded knights,
 French oaths, French vices, and the newest style
 Of out-puffed sleeve, shall pass from west to east,
 A winnowing fan to purify the seed
 For fair millennial harvests soon to come ?
 Or is not Spain the land of chosen warriors ? —
 Crusaders consecrated from the womb,
 Carrying the sword-cross stamped upon their souls
 By the long yearnings of a nation's life,
 Through all the seven patient centuries

Since first Pelayo and his resolute band
Trusted the God within their Gothic hearts
At Covadunga, and defied Mahound;
Beginning so the Holy War of Spain
That now is panting with the eagerness
Of labour near its end. The silver cross
Glitters o'er Malaga and streams dread light
On Moslem galleys, turning all their stores
From threats to gifts. What Spanish knight is he
Who, living now, holds it not shame to live
Apart from that hereditary battle
Which needs his sword? Castilian gentlemen
Choose not their task, — they choose to do it well.

The time is great, and greater no man's trust
Than his who keeps the fortress for his king,
Wearing great honours as some delicate robe
Brocaded o'er with names 't were sin to tarnish.
Born de la Cerda, Calatravan knight,
Count of Segura, fourth Duke of Bedmár,
Offshoot from that high stock of old Castile
Whose topmost branch is proud Medina Celi, —
Such titles with their blazonry are his
Who keeps this fortress, sworn Alcajde,
Lord of the valley, master of the town,
Commanding whom he will, himself commanded
By Christ his Lord who sees him from the Cross
And from bright heaven where the Mother pleads; —
By good Saint James upon the milk-white steed,
Who leaves his bliss to fight for chosen Spain; —
By the dead gaze of all his ancestors; —
And by the mystery of his Spanish blood
Charged with the awe and glories of the past.
See now with soldiers in his front and rear
He winds at evening through the narrow streets

That toward the Castle gate climb devious :
 His charger, of fine Andalusian stock,
 An Indian beauty, black but delicate,
 Is conscious of the herald trumpet note,
 The gathèring glances, and familiar ways
 That lead fast homeward : she forgets fatigue,
 And at the light touch of the master's spur
 Thrills with the zeal to bear him royally,
 Arches her neck and clambers up the stones
 As if disdainful of the difficult steep.
 Night-black the charger, black the rider's plume,
 But all between is bright with morning hues, —
 Seems ivory and-gold and deep blue gems,
 And starry flashing steel and pale vermilion,
 All set in jasper : on his surcoat white
 Glitter the sword-belt and the jewelled hilt,
 Red on the back and breast the holy cross,
 And 'twixt the helmet and the soft-spun white
 Thick tawny wavelets like the lion's mane
 Turn backward from his brow, pale, wide, erect,
 Shadowing blue eyes, — blue as the rain-washed
 sky

That braced the early stem of Gothic kings
 He claims for ancestry. A goodly knight,
 A noble caballero, broad of chest
 And long of limb. So much the August sun,
 Now in the west but shooting half its beams
 Past a dark rocky profile toward the plain,
 At winding opportunities across the slope
 Makes suddenly luminous for all who see :
 For women smiling from the terraced roofs ;
 For boys that prone on trucks with head up-
 propped,
 Lazy and curious, stare irreverent ;
 For men who make obeisance with degrees

Of good-will shading toward servility,
 Where good-will ends and secret fear begins,
 And curses, too, low-muttered through the teeth,
 Explanatory to the God of Shem.

Five, grouped within a whitened tavern court
 Of Moorish fashion, where the trellised vines
 Purpling above their heads make odorous shade,
 Note through the open door the passers-by,
 Getting some rills of novelty to speed
 The lagging stream of talk and help the wine.
 'Tis Christian to drink wine: whoso denies
 His flesh at bidding save of Holy Church,
 Let him beware and take to Christian sins
 Lest he be taxed with Moslem sanctity.

The souls are five, the talkers only three.
 (No time, most tainted by wrong faith and rule,
 But holds some listeners and dumb animals.)
 MINE HOST is one: he with the well-arched nose,
 Soft-eyed, fat-handed, loving men for naught
 But his own humour, patting old and young
 Upon the back, and mentioning the cost
 With confidential blandness, as a tax
 That he collected much against his will
 From Spaniards who were all his bosom friends:
 Warranted Christian, — else how keep an inn,
 Which calling asks true faith? though like his
 wine

Of cheaper sort, a trifle over-new.
 His father was a convert, chose the chrism
 As men choose physic, kept his chimney warm
 With smokiest wood upon a Saturday,
 Counted his gains and grudges on a chaplet,
 And crossed himself asleep for fear of spies;
 Trusting the God of Israel would see

'T was Christian tyranny that made him base.
 Our host his son was born ten years too soon,
 Had heard his mother call him Ephraim,
 Knew holy things from common, thought it sin
 To feast on days when Israel's children mourned,
 So had to be converted with his sire,
 To doff the awe he learned as Ephraim,
 And suit his manners to a Christian name.
 But infant awe, that unborn breathing thing,
 Dies with what nourished it, can never rise
 From the dead womb and walk and seek new
 pasture.

Baptism seemed to him a merry game
 Not tried before, all sacraments a mode
 Of doing homage for one's property,
 And all religions a queer human whim
 Or else a vice, according to degrees :
 As, 't is a whim to like your chestnuts hot,
 Burn your own mouth and draw your face awry,
 A vice to pelt frogs with them, — animals
 Content to take life coolly. And Lorenzo
 Would have all lives made easy, even lives
 Of spiders and inquisitors, yet still
 Wishing so well to flies and Moors and Jews,
 He rather wished the others easy death ;
 For loving all men clearly was deferred
 Till all men loved each other. Such mine Host,
 With chiselled smile caressing Seneca,
 The solemn mastiff leaning on his knee.

His right-hand guest is solemn as the dog,
 Square-faced and massive : BLASCO is his name,
 A prosperous silversmith from Aragon ;
 In speech not silvery, rather tuned as notes
 From a deep vessel made of plenteous iron,

Or some great bell of slow but certain swing
That, if you only wait, will tell the hour
As well as flippant clocks that strike in haste
And set off chiming a superfluous tune, —
Like JUAN there, the spare man with the lute,
Who makes you dizzy with his rapid tongue,
Whirring athwart your mind with comment swift
On speech you would have finished by and by,
Shooting your bird for you while you are loading,
Cheapening your wisdom as a pattern known,
Woven by any shuttle on demand.
Can never sit quite still, too: sees a wasp
And kills it with a movement like a flash;
Whistles low notes or seems to thrum his lute
As a mere hyphen 'twixt two syllables
Of any steadier man; walks up and down
And snuffs the orange flowers and shoots a pea
To hit a streak of light let through the awning.
Has a queer face: eyes large as plums, a nose
Small, round, uneven, like a bit of wax
Melted and cooled by chance. Thin-fingered, lithe,
And as a squirrel noiseless, startling men
Only by quickness. In his speech and look
A touch of graceful wildness, as of things
Not trained or tamed for uses of the world;
Most like the Fauns that roamed in days of old
About the listening whispering woods, and shared
The subtler sense of sylvan ears and eyes
Undulled by scheming thought, yet joined the rout
Of men and women on the festal days,
And played the syrinx too, and knew love's pains,
Turning their anguish into melody.
For Juan was a minstrel still, in times
When minstrelsy was held a thing outworn.
Spirits seem buried and their epitaph

Is writ in Latin by severest pens,
 Yet still they flit above the trodden grave
 And find new bodies, animating them
 In quaint and ghostly way with antique souls.
 So Juan was a troubadour revived,
 Freshening life's dusty road with babbling rills
 Of wit and song, living 'mid harnessed men
 With limbs ungalled by armour, ready so
 To soothe them weary, and to cheer them sad.
 Guest at the board, companion in the camp,
 A crystal mirror to the life around,
 Flashing the comment keen of simple fact
 Defined in words; lending brief lyric voice
 To grief and sadness; hardly taking note
 Of difference betwixt his own and others';
 But rather singing as a listener
 To the deep moans, the cries, the wild strong joys
 Of universal Nature, old yet young.
 Such Juan, the third talker, shimmering bright
 As butterfly or bird with quickest life.

The silent ROLDAN has his brightness too,
 But only in his spangles and rosettes.
 His party-coloured vest and crimson hose
 Are dulled with old Valencian dust, his eyes
 With straining fifty years at gilded balls
 To catch them dancing, or with brazen looks
 At men and women as he made his jests
 Some thousand times and watched to count the
 pence
 His wife was gathering. His olive face
 Has an old writing in it, characters
 Stamped deep by grins that had no merriment,
 The soul's rude mark proclaiming all its blank;
 As on some faces that have long grown old

In lifting tapers up to forms obscene
 On ancient walls and chuckling with false zest
 To please my lord, who gives the larger fee
 For that hard industry in apishness.
 Roldan would gladly never laugh again;
 Pensioned, he would be grave as any ox,
 And having beans and crumbs and oil secured
 Would borrow no man's jokes forevermore.
 'Tis harder now because his wife is gone,
 Who had quick feet, and danced to ravishment
 Of every ring jewelled with Spanish eyes,
 But died and left this boy, lame from his birth,
 And sad and obstinate, though when he will
 He sings God-taught such marrow-thrilling strains
 As seem the very voice of dying Spring,
 A flute-like wail that mourns the blossoms gone,
 And sinks, and is not, like their fragrant breath,
 With fine transition on the trembling air.
 He sits as if imprisoned by some fear,
 Motionless, with wide eyes that seem not made
 For hungry glancing of a twelve-yearred boy
 To mark the living thing that he could tease,
 But for the gaze of some primeval sadness
 Dark twin with light in the creative ray.
 This little PABLO has his spangles too,
 And large rosettes to hide his poor left foot
 Rounded like any hoof (his mother thought
 God willed it so to punish all her sins).

I said the souls were five, — besides the dog.
 But there was still a sixth, with wrinkled face,
 Grave and disgusted with all merriment
 Not less than Roldan. It is ANNIBAL,
 The experienced monkey who performs the tricks,
 Jumps through the hoops, and carries round the
 hat.

Once full of sallies and impromptu feats,
 Now cautious not to light on aught that 's new,
 Lest he be whipped to do it o'er again
 From A to Z, and make the gentry laugh :
 A misanthropic monkey, gray and grim,
 Bearing a lot that has no remedy
 For want of concert in the monkey tribe.

We see the company, above their heads
 The braided matting, golden as ripe corn,
 Stretched in a curving strip close by the grapes,
 Elsewhere rolled back to greet the cooler sky ;
 A fountain near, vase-shapen and broad-lipped,
 Where timorous birds alight with tiny feet,
 And hesitate and bend wise listening ears,
 And fly away again with undipped beak.
 On the stone floor the juggler's heaped-up goods,
 Carpet and hoops, viol and tambourine,
 Where Annibal sits perched with brows severe,
 A serious ape whom none take seriously,
 Obligated in this fool's world to earn his nuts
 By hard buffoonery. We see them all,
 And hear their talk, — the talk of Spanish men,
 With Southern intonation, vowels turned
 Caressingly between the consonants,
 Persuasive, willing, with such intervals
 As music borrows from the wooing birds,
 That plead with subtly curving, sweet descent, —
 And yet can quarrel, as these Spaniards can.

JUAN (near the doorway).

You hear the trumpet ? There 's old Ramon's blast,
 No bray but his can shake the air so well.
 He takes his trumpeting as solemnly
 As angel charged to wake the dead ; thinks war

Was made for trumpeters, and their great art
 Made solely for themselves who understand it.
 His features all have shaped themselves to blowing,
 And when his trumpet's bagged or left at home
 He seems a chattel in a broker's booth,
 A spoutless watering-can, a promise to pay
 No sum particular. O fine old Ramon!
 The blasts get louder and the clattering hoofs;
 They crack the ear as well as heaven's thunder
 For owls that listen blinking. There 's the banner.

HOST (*joining him : the others follow to the door*).

The Duke has finished reconnoitring, then?
 We shall hear news. They say he means a sally, —
 Would strike El Zagal's Moors as they push home
 Like ants with booty heavier than themselves;
 Then, joined by other nobles with their bands,
 Lay siege to Guadix. Juan, you're a bird
 That nest within the Castle. What say you?

JUAN.

Naught, I say naught. 'T is but a toilsome game
 To bet upon that feather Policy,
 And guess where after twice a hundred puffs
 'T will catch another feather crossing it:
 Guess how the Pope will blow and how the king;
 What force my lady's fan has; how a cough
 Seizing the Padre's throat may raise a gust,
 And how the queen may sigh the feather down.
 Such catching at imaginary threads,
 Such spinning twisted air, is not for me.
 If I should want a game, I'll rather bet
 On racing snails, two large, slow, lingering snails, —
 No spurring, equal weights, — a chance sublime,

Nothing to guess at, pure uncertainty.
 Here comes the Duke. They give but feeble shouts.
 And some look sour.

HOST.

That spoils a fair occasion.
 Civility brings no conclusions with it,
 And cheerful *Vivas* make the moments glide
 Instead of grating like a rusty wheel.

JUAN.

O they are dullards, kick because they 're stung,
 And bruise a friend to show they hate a wasp.

HOST.

Best treat your wasp with delicate regard;
 When the right moment comes say, "By your
 leave,"
 Use your heel — so! and make an end of him.
 That's if we talked of wasps; but our young
 Duke, —
 Spain holds not a more gallant gentleman.
 Live, live, Duke Silva! 'T is a rare smile he has,
 But seldom seen.

JUAN.

A true hidalgo's smile,
 That gives much favour, but beseeches none.
 His smile is sweetened by his gravity:
 It comes like dawn upon Sierra snows,
 Seeming more generous for the coldness gone;
 Breaks from the calm, — a sudden opening flower
 On dark deep waters: one moment shrouded close,

A mystic shrine, the next a full-rayed star,
Thrilling, pulse-quickening as a living word.
I'll make a song of that.

HOST.

Prithee, not now.

You'll fall to staring like a wooden saint,
And wag your head as it were set on wires.
Here's fresh sherbét. Sit, be good company.
(To BLASCO.) You are a stranger, sir, and cannot
know
How our Duke's nature suits his princely frame.

BLASCO.

Nay, but I marked his spurs, — chased cunningly!
A duke should know good gold and silver plate;
Then he will know the quality of mine.
I've ware for tables and for altars too;
Our Lady in all sizes, crosses, bells:
He'll need such weapons full as much as swords
If he would capture any Moorish town.
For, let me tell you, when a mosque is cleansed . . .

JUAN.

The demons fly so thick from sound of bells
And smell of incense, you may see the air
Streaked with them as with smoke. Why, they
are spirits:
You may well think how crowded they must be
To make a sort of haze.

BLASCO.

I knew not that.
Still, they're of smoky nature, demons are;

And since you say so, — well, it proves the more
 The need of bells and censers. Ay, your Duke
 Sat well: a true hidalgo. I can judge, —
 Of harness specially. I saw the camp,
 The royal camp at Velez Malaga.
 'T was like the court of heaven, — such liveries!
 And torches carried by the score at night
 Before the nobles. Sirs, I made a dish
 To set an emerald in would fit a crown,
 For Don Alonzo, lord of Aguilar.
 Your Duke's no whit behind him in his mien
 Or harness either. But you seem to say
 The people love him not.

Host.

They've naught against him.
 But certain winds will make men's temper bad.
 When the Solano blows hot venom'd breath,
 It acts upon men's knives: steel takes to stabbing
 Which else, with cooler winds, were honest steel,
 Cutting but garlick. There's a wind just now
 Blows right from Seville —

BLASCO.

Ay, you mean the wind . . .
 Yes, yes, a wind that's rather hot . . .

Host.

With fagots.

JUAN.

A wind that suits not with our townsmen's blood.
 Abram, 't is said, objected to be scorched,
 And, as the learned Arabs vouch, he gave
 The antipathy in full to Ishmaël.
 'T is true, these patriarchs had their oddities.

BLASCO.

Their oddities? I 'm of their mind, I know.
 Though, as to Abraham and Ishmaël,
 I 'm an old Christian, and owe naught to them
 Or any Jew among them. But I know
 We made a stir in Saragossa — we:
 The men of Aragon ring hard, — true metal.
 Sirs, I 'm no friend to heresy, but then
 A Christian's money is not safe. As how?
 A lapsing Jew or any heretic
 May owe me twenty ounces: suddenly
 He 's prisoned, suffers penalties, — 't is well:
 If men will not believe, 't is good to make them,
 But let the penalties fall on them alone.
 The Jew is stripped, his goods are confiscate;
 Now, where, I pray you, go my twenty ounces?
 God knows, and perhaps the King may, but not I
 And more, my son may lose his young wife's dower
 Because 't was promised since her father's soul
 Fell to wrong thinking. How was I to know?
 I could but use my sense and cross myself.
 Christian is Christian, — I give in, — but still
 Taxing is taxing, though you call it holy.
 We Saragossans liked not this new tax
 They call the — nonsense, I 'm from Aragon!
 I speak too bluntly. But, for Holy Church,
 No man believes more.

HOST.

Nay, sir, never fear.
 Good Master Roldan here is no delator.

ROLDAN (*starting from a reverie*).

You speak to me, sirs? I perform to-night —
 The Playa Santiago. Twenty tricks,

All different. I dance, too. And the boy
Sings like a bird. I crave your patronage.

BLASCO.

Faith, you shall have it, sir. In travelling
I take a little freedom, and am gay.
You marked not what I said just now ?

ROLDAN.

I ? no.

I pray your pardon. I 've a twinging knee
That makes it hard to listen. You were saying ?

BLASCO.

Nay, it was naught. (*Aside to HOST.*) Is it his
deepness ?

HOST.

No.

He 's deep in nothing but his poverty.

BLASCO.

But 't was his poverty that made me think . . .

HOST.

His piety might wish to keep the feasts
As well as fasts. No fear ; he hears not.

BLASCO.

Good.

I speak my mind about the penalties,
But, look you, I 'm against assassination.
You know my meaning — Master Arbués,
The grand Inquisitor in Aragon.
I knew naught, — paid no copper towards the deed.

But I was there, at prayers, within the church.
 How could I help it? Why, the saints were there,
 And looked straight on above the altars. I . . .

JUAN.

Looked carefully another way.

BLASCO.

Why, at my beads.
 'T was after midnight, and the canons all
 Were chanting matins. I was not in church
 To gape and stare. I saw the martyr kneel:
 I never liked the look of him alive, —
 He was no martyr then. I thought he made
 An ugly shadow as he crept athwart
 The bands of light, then passed within the gloom
 By the broad pillar. 'T was in our great Seo,
 At Saragossa. The pillars tower so large
 You cross yourself to see them, lest white Death
 Should hide behind their dark. And so it was.
 I looked away again and told my beads
 Unthinkingly; but still a man has ears;
 And right across the chanting came a sound
 As if a tree had crashed above the roar
 Of some great torrent. So it seemed to me;
 For when you listen long and shut your eyes
 Small sounds get thunderous. And he 'd a shell
 Like any lobster: a good iron suit
 From top to toe beneath the innocent serge.
 That made the telltale sound. But then came
 shrieks.
 The chanting stopped and turned to rushing feet,
 And in the midst lay Master Arbués,
 Felled like an ox. 'T was wicked butchery.
 Some honest men had hoped it would have scared

The Inquisition out of Aragon.

'T was money thrown away, — I would say,
crime, —

Clean thrown away.

HOST.

That was a pity now.

Next to a missing thrust, what irks me most
Is a neat well-aimed stroke that kills your man,
Yet ends in mischief, — as in Aragon.

It was a lesson to our people here.

Else there 's a monk within our city walls,
A holy, high-born, stern Dominican,
They might have made the great mistake to kill.

BLASCO.

What! is he? . . .

HOST.

Yes; a Master Arbués
Of finer quality. The Prior here
And uncle to our Duke.

BLASCO.

He will want plate:
A holy pillar or a crucifix.
But, did you say, he was like Arbués?

JUAN.

As a black eagle with gold beak and claws
Is like a raven. Even in his cowl,
Covered from head to foot, the Prior is known
From all the black herd round. When he uncovers
And stands white-frocked, with ivory face, his eyes
Black-gleaming, black his coronet of hair
Like shredded jasper, he seems less a man

With struggling aims than pure incarnate Will,
 Fit to subdue rebellious nations, nay,
 That human flesh he breathes in, charged with
 passion
 Which quivers in his nostril and his lip,
 But disciplined by long-indwelling will
 To silent labour in the yoke of law.
 A truce to thy comparisons, Lorenzo!
 Thine is no subtle nose for difference;
 'T is dulled by feigning and civility.

HOST.

Pooh, thou 'rt a poet, crazed with finding words
 May stick to things and seem like qualities.
 No pebble is a pebble in thy hands:
 'T is a moon out of work, a barren egg,
 Or twenty things that no man sees but thee.
 Our father Isidor 's — a living saint,
 And that is heresy, some townsmen think:
 Saints should be dead, according to the Church.
 My mind is this: the Father is so holy
 'T were sin to wish his soul detained from bliss.
 Easy translation to the realms above,
 The shortest journey to the seventh heaven,
 Is what I 'd never grudge him.

BLASCO.

Piously said.

Look you, I 'm dutiful, obey the Church
 When there 's no help for it: I mean to say,
 When Pope and Bishop and all customers
 Order alike. But there be bishops now,
 And were aforetime, who have held it wrong,
 This hurry to convert the Jews. As, how?
 Your Jew pays tribute to the bishop, say.

That 's good, and must please God, to see the Church
 Maintained in ways that ease the Christian's purse.
 Convert the Jew, and where 's the tribute, pray?
 He lapses, too: 't is slippery work, -conversion:
 And then the holy taxing carries off
 His money at one sweep. No tribute more!
 He 's penitent or burnt, and there 's an end.
 Now guess which pleases God . . .

JUAN.

Whether he likes
 A well-burnt Jew or well-fed bishop best.

[While Juan put this problem theologic
 Entered, with resonant step, another guest, —
 A soldier: all his keenness in his sword,
 His eloquence in scars upon his cheek,
 His virtue in much slaying of the Moor:
 With brow well-creased in horizontal folds .
 To save the space, as having naught to do:
 Lips prone to whistle whisperingly, — no tune,
 But trotting rhythm: meditative eyes,
 Most often fixed upon his legs and spurs:
 Invited much, and held good company:
 Styled Captain Lopez.]

LOPEZ.

At your service, sirs.

JUAN.

Ha, Lopez? Why, thou hast a face full-charged
 As any herald's. What news of the wars?

LOPEZ.

Such news as is most bitter on my tongue.

JUAN.

Then spit it forth.

HOST.

Sit, Captain: here 's a cup,
Fresh-filled. What news?

LOPEZ.

'T is bad. We make no sally.
We sit still here and wait whate'er the Moor
Shall please to do.

HOST.

Some townsmen will be glad.

LOPEZ.

Glad, will they be? But I'm not glad, not I,
Nor any Spanish soldier of clean blood.
But the Duke's wisdom is to wait a siege
Instead of laying one. Therefore — meantime —
He will be married straightway.

HOST.

Ha, ha, ha!

Thy speech is like an hourglass; turn it down
The other way, 't will stand as well, and say
The Duke will wed, therefore he waits a siege.
But what say Don Diego and the Prior?
The holy uncle and the fiery Don?

LOPEZ.

Oh there be sayings running all abroad
As thick as nuts o'erturned. No man need lack.
Some say, 't was letters changed the Duke's intent:
From Malaga, says Blas. From Rome, says Quintin.

From spies at Guadix, says Sebastian.
 Some say, 't is all a pretext, — say, the Duke
 Is but a lapdog hanging on a skirt,
 Turning his eyeballs upward like a monk:
 'T was Don Diego said that, — so says Blas;
 Last week, he said . . .

JUAN.

Oh do without the “said”!
 Open thy mouth and pause in lieu of it.
 I had as lief be pelted with a pea
 Irregularly in the selfsame spot
 As hear such iteration without rule,
 Such torture of uncertain certainty.

LOPEZ.

Santiago! Juan, thou art hard to please.
 I speak not for my own delighting, I.
 I can be silent, I.

BLASCO.

Nay, sir, speak on!
 I like your matter well. I deal in plate.
 This wedding touches me. Who is the bride?

LOPEZ.

One that some say the Duke does ill to wed.
 One that his mother reared — God rest her soul! —
 Duchess Diana, — she who died last year.
 A bird picked up away from any nest.
 Her name — the Duchess gave it — is Fedalma.
 No harm in that. But the Duke stoops, they
 say,
 In wedding her. And that 's the simple truth.

JUAN.

Thy simple truth is but a false opinion :
 The simple truth of asses who believe .
 Their thistle is the very best of food.
 Fie, Lopez, thou a Spaniard with a sword
 Dreamest a Spanish noble ever stoops
 By doing honour to the maid he loves !
 He stoops alone when he dishonours her.

LOPEZ.

Nay, I said naught against her.

JUAN.

Better not.

Else I would challenge thee to fight with wits,
 And spear thee through and through ere thou
 couldst draw
 The bluntest word. Yes, yes, consult thy spurs :
 Spurs are a sign of knighthood, and should tell thee
 That knightly love is blent with reverence
 As heavenly air is blent with heavenly blue.
 Don Silva's heart beats to a chivalric tune :
 He wills no highest-born Castilian dame,
 Betrothed to highest noble, should be held
 More sacred than Fedalma. He enshrines
 Her virgin image for the general worship
 And for his own, — will guard her from the world,
 Nay, his profaner self, lest he should lose
 The place of his religion. He does well.
 Naught can come closer to the poets' strain.

HOST.

Or further from their practice, Juan, eh ?
 If thou 'rt a specimen ?

JUAN.

Wrong, my Lorenzo!
Touching Fedalma the poor poet plays
A finer part even than the noble Duke.

LOPEZ.

By making ditties, singing with round mouth
Likest a crowing cock? Thou meanest that?

JUAN.

Lopez, take physic, thou art getting ill,
Growing descriptive; 't is unnatural.
I mean, Don Silva's love expects reward,
Kneels with a heaven to come; but the poor poet
Worships without reward, nor hopes to find
A heaven save in his worship. He adores
The sweetest woman for her sweetness' sake,
Joys in the love that was not born for him,
Because 't is lovingness, as beggars joy,
Warming their naked limbs on wayside walls,
To hear a tale of princes and their glory.
There 's a poor poet (poor, I mean, in coin)
Worships Fedalma with so true a love
That if her silken robe were changed for rags,
And she were driven out to stony wilds
Barefoot, a scornéd wanderer, he would kiss
Her ragged garment's edge, and only ask
For leave to be her slave. Digest that, friend,
Or let it lie upon thee as a weight
To check light thinking of Fedalma.

LOPEZ.

I?

I think no harm of her; I thank the saints
I wear a sword and peddle not in thinking.

'T is Father Marcos says she 'll not confess
 And loves not holy water; says her blood
 Is infidel; says the Duke's wedding her
 Is union of light with darkness.

JUAN.

Tush!

[Now Juan — who by snatches touched his lute
 With soft arpeggio, like a whispered dream
 Of sleeping music, while he spoke of love, —
 In jesting anger at the soldier's talk
 Thrummed loud and fast, then faster and more
 loud,
 Till, as he answered, "Tush!" he struck a chord
 Sudden as whip-crack close by Lopez' ear.
 Mine host and Blaseo smiled, the mastiff barked,
 Roldan looked up and Annibal looked down,
 Cautiously neutral in so new a case;
 The boy raised longing, listening eyes that seemed
 An exiled spirit's waiting in strained hope
 Of voices coming from the distant land.
 But Lopez bore the assault like any rock:
That was not what he drew his sword at — he!
 He spoke with neck erect.]

LOPEZ.

If that 's a hint
 The company should ask thee for a song,
 Sing, then!

HOST.

Ay, Juan, sing, and jar no more.
 Something brand new. Thou 'rt wont to make my
 ear
 A test of novelties. Hast thou aught fresh?

JUAN.

As fresh as rain-drops. Here 's a Cancion
Spirings like a tiny mushroom delicate
Out of the priest's foul scandal of Fedalma.

[He preluded with questioning intervals,
Rising, then falling just a semitone,
In minor cadence, — sound with poiséd wing
Hovering and quivering towards the needed fall
Then in a voice that shook the willing air
With masculine vibration sang this song.

*Should I long that dark were fair?
Say, O song!
Lacks my love aught, that I should long?*

*Dark the night, with breath all flow'rs,
And tender broken voice that fills
With ravishment the listening hours:
Whisperings, wooings,
Liquid ripples and soft ring-dove cooings
In low-toned rhythm that love's aching stills.
Dark the night,
Yet is she bright,
For in her dark she brings the mystic star,
Trembling yet strong, as is the voice of love,
From some unknown afar.
O radiant Dark! O darkly fostered ray!
Thou hast a joy too deep for shallow Day.*

While Juan sang, all round the tavern court
Gathered a constellation of black eyes.
Fat Lela leaned upon the balcony
With arms that might have pillowed Hercules

(Who built, 't is known, the mightiest Spanish towns);

Thin Alda's face, sad as a wasted passion,
 Leaned o'er the nodding baby's; 'twixt the rails
 The little Pepe showed his two black beads,
 His flat-ringed hair and small Semitic nose
 Complete and tiny as a new-born minnow;
 Patting his head and holding in her arms
 The baby senior, stood Lorenzo's wife
 All negligent, her kerchief discomposed
 By little clutches, woman's coquetry
 Quite turned to mother's cares and sweet content.
 These on the balcony, while at the door
 Gazed the lank boys and lazy-shouldered men.
 'T is likely too the rats and insects peeped,
 Being southern Spanish ready for a lounge.
 The singer smiled, as doubtless Orpheus smiled,
 To see the animals both great and small,
 The mountainous elephant and scampering mouse,
 Held by the ears in decent audience;
 Then, when mine host desired the strain once
 more,
 He fell to preluding with rhythmic change
 Of notes recurrent, soft as pattering drops
 That fall from off the eaves in faëry dance
 When clouds are breaking; till at measured pause
 He struck, in rare responsive chords, a refrain.]

HOST.

Come, then, a gayer romaunt, if thou wilt:
 I quarrel not with change. What say you, Captain?

LOPEZ.

All 's one to me. I note no change of tune,
 Not I, save in the ring of horses' hoofs,

Or in the drums and trumpets when they call
To action or retreat. I ne'er could see
The good of singing.

BLASCO.

Why, it passes time, —
Saves you from getting over-wise: that 's good.
For, look you, fools are merry here below,
Yet they will go to heaven all the same,
Having the sacraments; and, look you, heaven
Is a long holiday, and solid men,
Used to much business, might be ill at ease
Not liking play. And so in travelling
I shape myself betimes to idleness
And take fools' pleasures . . .

HOST.

Hark, the song begins!

JUAN (*sings*).

*Maiden, crowned with glossy blackness,
Lithe as panther forest-roaming,
Long-armed naiad, when she dances,
On a stream of ether floating, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!*

*Form all curves like softness drifted,
Wave-kissed marble roundly dimpling,
Far-off music slowly wingéd,
Gently rising, gently sinking, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!*

*Pure as rain-tear on a rose-leaf,
Cloud high-born in noonday spotless,
Sudden perfect as the dew-bead,
Gem of earth and sky begotten, —
Bright, O bright Fedalma!*

*Beauty has no mortal father,
 Holy light her form engendered
 Out of tremor, yearning, gladness,
 Presage sweet and joy remembered,—
 Child of Light, Fedalma!*

BLASCO.

Faith, a good song, sung to a stirring tune.
 I like the words returning in a round;
 It gives a sort of sense. Another such!

ROLDAN (*rising*).

Sirs, you will hear my boy. 'T is very hard
 When gentles sing for naught to all the town.
 How can a poor man live? And now 't is time
 I go to the Plaça, — who will give me pence
 When he can hear hidalgos and give naught?

JUAN.

True, friend. Be pacified. I 'll sing no more.
 Go thou, and we will follow. Never fear.
 My voice is common as the ivy leaves,
 Plucked in all seasons, — bears no price; the boy's
 Is like the almond blossoms. Ah, he 's lame!

HOST.

Load him not heavily. Here, Pedro! help.
 Go with them to the Plaça, take the hoops.
 The sights will pay thee.

BLASCO.

I 'll be there anon,
 And set the fashion with a good white coin.
 But let us see as well as hear.

HOST.

Ay, prithee.

Some tricks, a dance.

BLASCO.

Yes, 't is more rational.

RÓLDAN (*turning round with the bundle and monkey on his shoulders*).

You shall see all, sirs. There 's no man in Spain
Knows his art better. I 've a twinging knee
Oft hinders dancing, and the boy is lame.
But no man's monkey has more tricks than mine.

[At this high praise the gloomy Annibal,
Mournful professor of high drollery,
Seemed to look gloomier, and the little troop
Went slowly out, escorted from the door
By all the idlers. From the balcony
Slowly subsided the black radiance
Of agate eyes, and broke in chattering sounds,
Coaxings and trappings, and the small hoarse
squeak
Of Pepe's reed. And our group talked again.]

HOST.

I 'll get this juggler, if he quits him well,
An audience here as choice as can be lured.
For me, when a poor devil does his best,
'T is my delight to soothe his soul with praise.
What though the best be bad? remains the good
Of throwing food to a lean hungry dog.
I 'd give up the best jugglery in life
To see a miserable juggler pleased.

But that 's my humour. Crowds are malcontent,
 And cruel as the Holy . . . Shall we go?
 All of us now together?

LOPEZ.

Well, not I.

I may be there anon, but first I go
 To the lower prison. There is strict command
 That all our Gypsy prisoners shall to-night
 Be lodged within the fort. They 've forged enough
 Of balls and bullets, — used up all the metal.
 At morn to-morrow they must carry stones
 Up the south tower. 'T is a fine stalwart band,
 Fit for the hardest tasks. Some say, the queen
 Would have the Gypsies banished with the Jews.
 Some say, 't were better harness them for work.
 They 'd feed on any filth and save the Spaniard.
 Some say — but I must go. 'T will soon be time
 To head the escort. We shall meet again.

BLASCO.

Go, sir, with God (*exit* LOPEZ). A very proper man,
 And soldierly. But, for this banishment
 Some men are hot on, it ill pleases me.
 The Jews, now (sirs, if any Christian here
 Had Jews for ancestors, I blame him not;
 We cannot all be Goths of Aragon), —
 Jews are not fit for heaven, but on earth
 They are most useful. 'T is the same with mules,
 Horses, or oxen, or with any pig
 Except Saint Anthony's. They are useful here
 (The Jews, I mean) though they may go to hell.
 And, look you, useful sins, — why Providence
 Sends Jews to do 'em, saving Christian souls.
 The very Gypsies, curbed and harnessed well,

Nature compacted with such fine selection,
 'T would yield a dozen types: all Spanish knights,
 From him who slew Rolando at the pass
 Up to the mighty Cid; all deities,
 Thronging Olympus in fine attitudes;
 Or all hell's heroes whom the poet saw
 Tremble like lions, writhe like demigods.

HOST.

Pause not yet, Juan, — more hyperbole!
 Shoot upward still and flare in meteors
 Before thou sink to earth in dull brown fact.

BLASCO.

Nay, give me fact, high shooting suits not me.
 I never stare to look for soaring larks.
 What is this Gypsy?

HOST.

Chieftain of a band,
 The Moor's allies, whom full a month ago
 Our Duke surprised and brought as captives home.
 He needed smiths, and doubtless the brave Moor
 Has missed some useful scouts and archers too.
 Juan's fantastic pleasure is to watch
 These Gypsies forging, and to hold discourse
 With this great chief, whom he transforms at
 ' will
 To sage or warrior, and like the sun
 Plays daily at fallacious alchemy,
 Turns sand to gold and dewy spider-webs
 To myriad rainbows. Still the sand is sand,
 And still in sober shade you see the web.
 'T is so, I'll wager, with his Gypsy chief, —
 A piece of stalwart cunning, nothing more.

JUAN.

No! My invention had been all too poor
 To frame this Zorca as I saw him first.
 'T was when they stripped him. In his chief-
 tain's gear,
 Amidst his men he seemed a royal barb
 Followed by wild-maned Andalusian colts.
 He had a necklace of a strange device
 In finest gold of unknown workmanship,
 But delicate as Moorish, fit to kiss
 Fedalma's neck, and play in shadows there.
 He wore fine mail, a rich-wrought sword and belt,
 And on his surcoat black a broidered torch,
 A pine-branch flaming, grasped by two dark hands.
 But when they stripped him of his ornaments
 It was the bawbles lost their grace, not he.
 His eyes, his mouth, his nostril, all inspired
 With scorn that mastered utterance of scorn,
 With power to check all rage until it turned
 To ordered force, unleashed on chosen prey, —
 It seemed the soul within him made his limbs
 And made them grand. The bawbles were well
 gone.
 He stood the more a king, when bared to man.

BLASCO.

Maybe. But nakedness is bad for trade,
 And is not decent. Well-wrought metal, sir,
 Is not a bawble. Had you seen the camp,
 The royal camp at Velez Malaga,
 Ponce de Leon and the other dukes,
 The king himself and all his thousand knights
 For body-guard, 't would not have left you breath
 To praise a Gypsy thus. A man's a man;

But when you see a king, you see the work
 Of many thousand men. King Ferdinand
 Bears a fine presence, and hath proper limbs;
 But what though he were shrunken as a relic?
 You 'd see the gold and gems that cased him o'er,
 And all the pages round him in brocade,
 And all the lords, themselves a sort of kings,
 Doing him reverence. That strikes an awe
 Into a common man,—especially
 A judge of plate.

HOST.

Faith, very wisely said.
 Purge thy speech, Juan. It is over-full
 Of this same Gypsy. Praise the Catholic King.
 And come now, let us see the juggler's skill.

The Praça Santiago.

'T is daylight still, but now the golden cross
 Uplifted by the angel on the dome
 Stands rayless in calm colour clear-defined
 Against the northern blue; from turrets high
 The flitting splendour sinks with folded wing
 Dark-hid till morning, and the battlements
 Wear soft relenting whiteness mellowed o'er
 By summers generous and winters bland.
 Now in the east the distance casts its veil,
 And gazes with a deepening earnestness.
 The old rain-fretted mountains in their robes
 Of shadow-broken gray; the rounded hills
 Reddened with blood of Titans, whose huge limbs,
 Entombed within, feed full the hardy flesh
 Of cactus green and blue, broad-sworded aloes;
 The cypress soaring black above the lines
 Of white court-walls; the jointed sugar-canes

Pale-golden with their feathers motionless
 In the warm quiet; — all thought-teaching form
 Utters itself in firm unshimmering hues.
 For the great rock has screened the westering sun
 That still on plains beyond streams vaporous gold
 Among the branches; and within Bedmár
 Has come the time of sweet serenity
 When colour glows unglittering, and the soul
 Of visible things shows silent happiness,
 As that of lovers trusting though apart.
 The ripe-cheeked fruits, the crimson-petalled
 flowers;
 The wingéd life that pausing seems a gem
 Cunningly carven on the dark green leaf;
 The face of man with hues supremely blent
 To difference fine as of a voice 'mid sounds: —
 Each lovely light-dipped thing seems to emerge
 Flushed gravely from baptismal sacrament.
 All beauteous existence rests, yet wakes,
 Lies still, yet conscious, with clear open eyes
 And gentle breath and mild suffuséd joy.
 'T is day, but day that falls like melody
 Repeated on a string with graver tones, —
 Tones such as linger in a long farewell.

The Plaça widens in the passive air, —
 The Plaça Santiago, where the church,
 A mosque converted, shows an eyeless face
 Red-checked, faded, doing penance still, —
 Bearing with Moorish arch the imaged saint,
 Apostle, baron, Spanish warrior,
 Whose charger's hoofs trample the turbaned dead,
 Whose banner with the Cross, the bloody sword,
 Flashes athwart the Moslem's glazing eye,
 And mocks his trust in Allah who forsakes.

Up to the church the Praça gently slopes,
In shape most like the pious palmer's shell,
Girdled with low white houses; high above
Tower the strong fortress and sharp-angled wall
And well-flanked castle gate. From o'er the roofs,
And from the shadowed pátios cool, there spreads
The breath of flowers and aromatic leaves
Soothing the sense with bliss indefinite, —
A baseless hope, a glad presentiment,
That curves the lip more softly, fills the eye
With more indulgent beam. And so it soothes,
So gently sways the pulses of the crowd
Who make a zone about the central spot
Chosen by Roldan for his theatre.
Maids with arched eyebrows, delicate-pencilled, dark,
Fold their round arms below the kerchief full;
Men shoulder little girls; and grandames gray,
But muscular still, hold babies on their arms;
While mothers keep the stout legged boys in front
Against their skirts, as old Greek pictures show
The Glorious Mother with the Boy divine.
Youths keep the places for themselves, and roll
Large lazy eyes, and call recumbent dogs
(For reasons deep below the reach of thought).
The old men cough with purpose, wish to hint
Wisdom within that cheapens jugglery,
Maintain a neutral air, and knit their brows
In observation. None are quarrelsome,
Noisy, or very merry; for their blood
Moves slowly into fervour, — they rejoice
Like those dark birds that sweep with heavy wing,
Cheering their mates with melancholy cries.

But now the gilded balls begin to play
In rhythmic numbers, ruled by practice fine

Of eye and muscle : all the juggler's form
 Consents harmonious in swift-gliding change,
 Easily forward stretched or backward bent
 With lightest step and movement circular
 Round a fixed point : 't is not the old Roldan
 now,

The dull, hard, weary, miserable man,
 The soul all parched to languid appetite
 And memory of desire : 't is wondrous force
 That moves in combination multiform
 Towards conscious ends : 't is Roldan glorious,
 Holding all eyes like any meteor,
 King of the moment save when Annibal
 Divides the scene and plays the comic part,
 Gazing with blinking glances up and down,
 Dancing and throwing naught and catching it,
 With mimicry as merry as the tasks
 Of penance-working shades in Tartarus.

Pablo stands passive, and a space apart,
 Holding a viol, waiting for command.
 Music must not be wasted, but must rise
 As needed climax ; and the audience
 Is growing with late comers. Juan now,
 And the familiar Host, with Blasco broad,
 Find way made gladly to the inmost round
 Studded with heads. Lorenzo knits the crowd
 Into one family by showing all
 Good-will and recognition. Juan casts
 His large and rapid-measuring glance around ;
 But — with faint quivering, transient as a breath
 Shaking a flame — his eyes make sudden pause
 Where by the jutting angle of a street
 Castle-ward leading, stands a female form,
 A kerchief pale square-drooping o'er the brow,

About her shoulders dim brown serge, — in garb
Most like a peasant-woman from the vale,
Who might have lingered after marketing
To see the show. What thrill mysterious,
Ray-borne from orb to orb of conscious eyes,
The swift observing sweep of Juan's glance
Arrests an instant, then with prompting fresh
Diverts it lastingly? He turns at once
To watch the gilded balls, and nod and smile
At little round Pepíta, blondest maid
In all Bedmár, — Pepíta, fair yet flecked,
Saucy of lip and nose, of hair as red
As breasts of robins stepping on the snow, —
Who stands in front with little tapping feet,
And baby-dimpled hands that hide enclosed
Those sleeping crickets, the dark castanets.
But soon the gilded balls have ceased to play,
And Annibal is leaping through the hoops
That turn to twelve, meeting him as he flies
In the swift circle. Shuddering he leaps,
But with each spring flies swift and swifter still
To loud and louder shouts, while the great hoops
Are changed to smaller. Now the crowd is fired.
The motion swift, the living victim urged,
The imminent failure and repeated scape
Hurry all pulses and intoxicate
With subtle wine of passion many-mixt.
'T is all about a monkey leaping hard
Till near to gasping; but it serves as well
As the great circus or arena dire,
Where these are lacking. Roldan cautiously
Slackens the leaps and lays the hoops to rest,
And Annibal retires with reeling brain
And backward stagger, — pity, he could not
smile!

Now Roldan spreads his carpet, now he shows
 Strange metamorphoses: the pebble black
 Changes to whitest egg within his hand;
 A staring rabbit, with retreating ears,
 Is swallowed by the air and vanishes;
 He tells men's thoughts about the shaken dice,
 Their secret choosings; makes the white beans

pass

With causeless act sublime from cup to cup
 Turned empty on the ground, — diablerie
 That pales the girls and puzzles all the boys:
 These tricks are samples, hinting to the town
 Roldan's great mastery. He tumbles next,
 And Annibal is called to mock each feat
 With arduous comicality and save
 By rule romantic the great public mind
 (And Roldan's body) from too serious strain.

But with the tumbling, lest the feats should fail,
 And so need veiling in a haze of sound,
 Pablo awakes the viol and the bow,—
 The masculine bow that draws the woman's heart
 From out the strings and makes them cry, yearn,
 plead,

Tremble, exult, with mystic union
 Of joy acute and tender suffering.
 To play the viol and discreetly mix
 Alternate with the bow's keen biting tones
 The throb responsive to the finger's touch,
 Was rarest skill that Pablo half had caught
 From an old blind and wandering Catalan;
 The other half was rather heritage
 From treasure stored by generations past
 In winding chambers of receptive sense.

The wingéd sounds exalt the thick-pressed crowd
 With a new pulse in common, blending all
 The gazing life into one larger soul
 With dimly widened consciousness: as waves
 In heightened movement tell of waves far off.
 And the light changes; westward stationed clouds,
 The sun's ranged outposts, luminous message
 spread,
 Rousing quiescent things to doff their shade
 And show themselves as added audience.
 Now Pablo, letting fall the eager bow,
 Solicits softer murmurs from the strings,
 And now above them pours a wondrous voice
 (Such as Greek reapers heard in Sicily)
 With wounding rapture in it, like love's arrows;
 And clear upon clear air as coloured gems
 Dropped in a crystal cup of water pure,
 Fall words of sadness, simple, lyrical:

Spring comes hither,

Buds the rose;

Roses wither,

Sweet spring goes.

Ojalá, would she carry me!

Summer soars,—

Wide-winged day

White light pours,

Flics away.

Ojalá, would he carry me!

Soft winds blow,

Westward born,

Onward go

Toward the morn.

Ojalá, would they carry me!

*Sweet birds sing
O'er the graves,
Then take wing
O'er the waves.
Ojalá, would they carry me !*

When the voice paused and left the viol's note
To plead forsaken, 't was as when a cloud,
Hiding the sun, makes all the leaves and flowers
Shiver. But when with measured change the strings
Had taugt regret new longing, clear again,
Welcome as hope recovered, flowed the voice.

*Warm whispering through the slender olive leaves
Came to me a gentle sound,
Whispering of a secret found
In the clear sunshine 'mid the golden sheaves :
Said it was sleeping for me in the morn,
Called it gladness, called it joy,
Drew me on — " Come hither, boy " —
To where the blue wings rested on the corn.
I thought the gentle sound had whispered true, —
Thought the little heaven mine,
Leaned to clutch the thing divine,
And saw the blue wings melt within the blue.*

The long notes linger on the trembling air,
With subtle penetration enter all
The myriad corridors of the passionate soul,
Message-like spread, and answering action rouse.
Not angular jigs that warm the chilly limbs
In hoary northern mists, but action curved
To soft andante strains pitched plaintively.
Vibrations sympathetic stir all limbs :
Old men live backward in their dancing prime,

And move in memory ; small legs and arms
 With pleasant agitation purposeless
 Go up and down like pretty fruits in gales.
 All long in common for the expressive act
 Yet wait for it ; as in the olden time
 Men waited for the bard to tell their thought.
 " The dance ! the dance ! " is shouted all around.
 Now Pablo lifts the bow, Pepíta now,
 Ready as bird that sees the sprinkled corn,
 When Juan nods and smiles, puts forth her foot
 And lifts her arm to wake the castanets.
 Juan advances, too, from out the ring
 And bends to quit his lute ; for now the scene
 Is empty ; Roldan, weary, gathers pence,
 Followed by Annibal with purse and stick.
 The carpet lies a coloured isle untrod,
 Inviting feet : " The dance, the dance," resounds,
 The bow entreats with slow melodic strain,
 And all the air with expectation yearns.

Sudden, with gliding motion like a flame
 That through dim vapour makes a path of glory,
 A figure lithe, all white and saffron-robed,
 Flashed right across the circle, and now stood
 With ripened arms uplift and regal head,
 Like some tall flower whose dark and intense heart
 Lies half within a tulip-tinted cup.

Juan stood fixed and pale ; Pepíta stepped
 Backward within the ring : the voices fell
 From shouts insistent to more passive tones
 Half meaning welcome, half astonishment.
 " Lady Fedalma ! — will she dance for us ? "

But she, sole swayed by impulse passionate,
 Feeling all life was music and all eyes

*"A figure lithe, all white and saffron robed,
Flashed right across the circle."*

Photo-Etching. — From Painting by W. L. Taylor.



The warming, quickening light that music makes,
 Moved as, in dance religious, Miriam,
 When on the Red Sea shore she raised her voice,
 And led the chorus of her people's joy ;
 Or as the Trojan maids that reverent sang
 Watching the sorrow-crownéd Hecuba :
 Moved in slow curves voluminous, gradual,
 Feeling and action flowing into one,
 In Eden's natural taintless marriage-bond ;
 Ardentlly modest, sensuously pure,
 With young delight that wonders at itself
 And throbs as innocent as opening flowers,
 Knowing not comment, — soiless, beautiful.
 The spirit in her gravely glowing face
 With sweet community informs her limbs,
 Filling their fine gradation with the breath
 Of virgin majesty ; as full vowelled words
 Are new impregnate with the master's thought.
 Even the chance-strayed delicate tendrils black,
 That backward 'scape from out her wreathing
 hair, —

Even the pliant folds that cling transverse
 When with obliquely soaring bend altern
 She seems a goddess quitting earth again —
 Gather expression — a soft undertone
 And resonance exquisite from the grand chord
 Of her harmoniously bodied soul.

At first a reverential silence guards
 The eager senses of the gazing crowd :
 They hold their breath, and live by seeing her.
 But soon the admiring tension finds relief, —
 Sighs of delight, applausive murmurs low,
 And stirrings gentle as of earéd corn
 Or seed-bent grasses, when the ocean's breath

Spreads landward. Even Juan is impelled
 By the swift-travelling movement: fear and doubt
 Give way before the hurrying energy;
 He takes his lute and strikes in fellowship,
 Filling more ^{*} full the rill of melody
 Raised ever and anon to clearest flood
 By Pablo's voice, that dies away too soon,
 Like the sweet blackbird's fragmentary chant,
 Yet wakes again, with varying rise and fall,
 In songs that seem emergent memories
 Prompting brief utterance, — little canci6ns
 And villancicos, Andalusia-born.

PABLO (*sings*).

*It was in the prime
 Of the sweet Spring-time.
 In the linnets' throat
 Trembled the love-note,
 And the love-stirred air
 Thrilled the blossoms there.
 Little shadows danced
 Each a tiny elf,
 Happy in large light
 And the thinnest self.*

*It was but a minute
 In a far-off Spring,
 But each gentle thing,
 Sweetly-wooing linnets,
 Soft-thrilled hawthorn-tree,
 Happy shadowy elf
 With the thinnest self,
 Live still on in me.
 Oh, the sweet, sweet prime
 Of the past Spring-time!*

And still the light is changing: high above
 Float soft pink clouds; others with deeper flush
 Stretch like flamingoes bending toward the south.
 Comes a more solemn brilliance o'er the sky,
 A meaning more intense upon the air, —
 The inspiration of the dying day.
 And Juan now, when Pablo's notes subside,
 Soothes the regretful ear, and breaks the pause
 With masculine voice in deep antiphony.

JUAN (*sings*).

*Day is dying! Float, O song,
 Down the westward river,
 Requiem chanting to the Day, —
 Day, the mighty Giver.*

*Pierced by shafts of Time he bleeds
 Melted rubies sending
 Through the river and the sky,
 Earth and heaven blending;*

*All the long-drawn earthly banks
 Up to cloud-land lifting:
 Slow between them drifts the swan,
 'Twixt two heavens drifting.*

*Wings half open, like a flow'r
 Inly deeper flushing,
 Neck and breast as virgin's pure, —
 Virgin proudly blushing.*

*Day is dying! Float, O swan,
 Down the ruby river;
 Follow, song, in requiem
 To the mighty Giver.*

The exquisite hour, the ardour of the crowd,
The strains more plenteous, and the gathering
 might

Of action passionate where no effort is,
But self's poor gates open to rushing power
That blends the inward ebb and outward vast, —
All gathering influences culminate
And urge Fedalma. Earth and heaven seem one,
Life a glad trembling on the outer edge
Of unknown rapture. Swifter now she moves,
Filling the measure with a double beat
And widening circle; now she seems to glow
With more declaréd presence, glorified.
Circling, she lightly bends and lifts on high
The multitudinous-sounding tambourine,
And makes it ring and boom, then lifts it higher
Stretching her left arm beauteous; now the crowd
Exultant shouts, forgetting poverty
In the rich moment of possessing her.

But sudden, at one point, the exultant throng
Is pushed and hustled, and then thrust apart:
Something approaches, — something cuts the ring
Of jubilant idlers, — startling as a streak
From alien wounds across the blooming flesh
Of careless sporting childhood. 'Tis the band
Of Gypsy prisoners. Soldiers lead the van
And make sparse flanking guard, aloof surveyed
By gallant Lopez, stringent in command.
The Gypsies chained in couples, all save one,
Walk in dark file with grand bare legs and arms
And savage melancholy in their eyes
That star-like gleam from out black clouds of hair;
Now they are full in sight, and now they stretch
Right to the centre of the open space.

Fedalma now, with gentle wheeling sweep
 Returning, like the loveliest of the Hours
 Strayed from her sisters, truant lingering,
 Faces again the centre, swings again
 The uplifted tambourine . . .

When lo! with sound

Stupendous throbbing, solemn as a voice
 Sent by the invisible choir of all the dead,
 Tolls the great passing bell that calls to prayer
 For souls departed: at the mighty beat
 It seems the light sinks awe-struck, — 't is the note
 Of the sun's burial; speech and action pause;
 Religious silence and the holy sign
 Of everlasting memories (the sign
 Of death that turned to more diffusive life)
 Pass o'er the Praça. Little children gaze
 With lips apart, and feel the unknown god;
 And the most men and women pray. Not all.
 The soldiers pray; the Gypsies stand unmoved
 As pagan statues with proud level gaze.
 But he who wears a solitary chain
 Heading the file, has turned to face Fedalma.
 She motionless, with arm uplifted, guards
 The tambourine aloft (lest, sudden-lowered,
 Its trivial jingle mar the duteous pause),
 Reveres the general prayer, but prays not, stands
 With level glance meeting that Gypsy's eyes,
 That seem to her the sadness of the world
 Rebuking her, the great bell's hidden thought
 Now first unveiled, — the sorrows unredeemed
 Of races outcast, scorned, and wandering.
 Why does he look at her? why she at him?
 As if the meeting light between their eyes
 Made permanent union? His deep-knit brow,
 Inflated nostril, scornful lip compressed,

Seem a dark hieroglyph of coming fate
 Written before her. Father Isidor
 Had terrible eyes, and was her enemy ;
 She knew it and defied him ; all her soul
 Rounded and hardened in its separateness
 When they encountered. But this prisoner, —
 This Gypsy, passing, gazing casually, —
 Was he her enemy too ? She stood all quelled,
 The impetuous joy that hurried in her veins
 Seemed backward rushing turned to chilliest awe,
 Uneasy wonder, and a vague self-doubt.
 The minute brief stretched measureless, dream-
 filled
 By a dilated new-fraught consciousness.

Now it was gone ; the pious murmur ceased,
 The Gypsies all moved onward at command
 And careless noises blent confusedly.
 But the ring closed again, and many ears
 Waited for Pablo's music, many eyes
 Turned towards the carpet : it lay bare and dim,
 Twilight was there, — the bright Fedalma gone.

*A handsome room in the Castle. On a table a rich
 jewel-casket.*

Silva had dropped his mail and with it all
 The heavier harness of his warlike cares.
 He had not seen Fedalma ; miser-like
 He hoarded through the hour a costlier joy
 By longing oft-repressed. Now it was earned ;
 And with observance wanted he would send
 To ask admission. Spanish gentlemen
 Who wooed fair dames of noble ancestry
 Did homage with rich tunics and slashed sleeves
 And outward-surgings linen's costly snow ;

With broidered scarf transverse, and rosary
Handsomely wrought to fit high-blooded prayer;
So hinting in how deep respect they held
That self they threw before their lady's feet.
And Silva — that Fedalma's mate should stand
No jot below the highest, that her love
Might seem to all the royal gift it was —
Turned every trifle in his mien and garb
To scrupulous language, uttering to the world
That since she loved him he went carefully,
Bearing a thing so precious in his hand.
A man of high-wrought strain, fastidious
In his acceptance, dreading all delight
That speedy dies and turns to carrion:
His senses much exacting, deep instilled
With keen imagination's difficult needs; —
Like strong-limbed monsters studded o'er with
 eyes,
Their hunger checked by overwhelming vision,
Or that fierce lion in symbolic dream
Snatched from the ground by wings and new-
 endowed
With a man's thought-propelled relenting heart.
Silva was both the lion and the man;
First hesitating shrank, then fiercely sprang,
Or having sprung, turned pallid at his deed
And loosed the prize, paying his blood for naught.
A nature half-transformed, with qualities
That oft bewrayed each other, elements
Not blent but struggling, breeding strange effects,
Passing the reckoning of his friends or foes.
Haughty and generous, grave and passionate;
With tidal moments of devoutest awe,
Sinking anon to furthest ebb of doubt;
Deliberating ever, till the sting

Of a recurrent ardour made him rush
Right against reasons that himself had drilled
And marshalled painfully. A spirit framed
Too proudly special for obedience,
Too subtly pondering for mastery :
Born of a goddess with a mortal sire,
Heir of flesh-fettered, weak divinity,
Doom-gifted with long resonant consciousness
And perilous heightening of the sentient soul.
But look less curiously : life itself
May not express us all, may leave the worst
And the best too, like tunes in mechanism
Never awaked. In various catalogues
Objects stand variously. Silva stands
As a young Spaniard, handsome, noble, brave,
With titles many, high in pedigree ;
Or, as a nature quiveringly poised
In reach of storms, whose qualities may turn
To murdered virtues that still walk as ghosts
Within the shuddering soul and shriek remorse ;
Or, as a lover . . . In the screening time
Of purple blossoms when the petals crowd
And softly crush like cherub cheeks in heaven,
Who thinks of greenly withered fruit and worms ?
Oh the warm southern spring is beauteous !
And in love's spring all good seems possible :
No threats, all promise, brooklets ripple full
And bathe the rushes, vicious crawling things
Are pretty eggs, the sun shines graciously
And parches not, the silent rain beats warm
As childhood's kisses, days are young and grow,
And earth seems in its sweet beginning time
Fresh made for two who live in Paradise.
Silva is in love's spring, its freshness breathed
Within his soul along the dusty ways

While marching homeward ; 't is around him now
 As in a garden fenced in for delight,—
 And he may seek delight. Smiling he lifts
 A whistle from his belt, but lets it fall
 Ere it has reached his lips, jarred by the sound
 Of ushers' knocking, and a voice that craves
 Admission for the Prior of San Domingo.

PRIOR (*entering*).

You look perturbed, my son. I thrust myself
 Between you and some beckoning intent
 That wears a face more smiling than my own.

DON SILVA.

Father, enough that you are here. I wait,
 As always, your commands, — nay, should have
 sought
 An early audience.

PRIOR.

To give, I trust,
 Good reasons for your change of policy ?

DON SILVA.

Strong reasons, father.

PRIOR.

Ay, but are they good ?
 I have known reasons strong, but strongly evil.

DON SILVA.

'T is possible. I but deliver mine
 To your strict judgment. Late despatches sent
 With urgency by the Count of Bavien,
 No hint on my part prompting, with besides

The testified concurrence of the king
 And our Grand Master, have made peremptory
 The course which else had been but rational.
 Without the forces furnished by allies
 The siege of Guadix would be madness. More,
 El Zagal has his eyes upon Bedmár:
 Let him attempt it: in three weeks from hence
 The Master and the Lord of Aguilar
 Will bring their forces. We shall catch the Moors,
 The last gleaned clusters of their bravest men,
 As in a trap. You have my reasons, father.

PRIOR.

And they sound well. But free-tongued rumour adds
 A pregnant supplement, — in substance this:
 That inclination snatches arguments
 To make indulgence seem judicious choice;
 That you, commanding in God's Holy War,
 Lift prayers to Satan to retard the fight
 And give you time for feasting, — wait a siege,
 Call daring enterprise impossible,
 Because you'd marry! You, a Spanish duke,
 Christ's general, would marry like a clown,
 Who, selling fodder dearer for the war,
 Is all the merrier; nay, like the brutes,
 Who know no awe to check their appetite,
 Coupling 'mid heaps of slain, while still in front
 The battle rages.

DON SILVA.

Rumour on your lips
 Is eloquent, father.

PRIOR.

Is she true?

DON SILVA.

Perhaps.

I seek to justify my public acts
 And not my private joy. Before the world
 Enough if I am faithful in command,
 Betray not by my deeds, swerve from no task
 My knightly vows constrain me to: herein
 I ask all men to test me.

PRIOR.

Knightly vows?

Is it by their constraint that you must marry?

DON SILVA.

Marriage is not a breach of them. I use
 A sanctioned liberty . . . your pardon, father,
 I need not teach you what the Church decrees.
 But facts may weaken texts, and so dry up
 The fount of eloquence. The Church relaxed
 Our Order's rule before I took the vows.

PRIOR.

Ignoble liberty! you snatch your rule
 From what God tolerates, not what he loves? —
 Inquire what lowest offering may suffice,
 Cheapen it meanly to an obolus,
 Buy, and then count the coin left in your purse
 For your debauch? — Measure obedience
 By scantest powers of feeble brethren
 Whom Holy Church indulges? — Ask great Law,
 The rightful Sovereign of the human soul,
 For what it pardons, not what it commands?
 Oh fallen knighthood, penitent of high vows,
 Asking a charter to degrade itself!

Such poor apology of rules relaxed
 Blunts not suspicion of that doubleness
 Your enemies tax you with.

DON SILVA.

Oh, for the rest,
 Conscience is harder than our enemies,
 Knows more, accuses with more nicety,
 Nor needs to question Rumour if we fall
 Below the perfect model of our thought.
 I fear no outward arbiter. — You smile?

PRIOR.

Ay, at the contrast 'twixt your portraiture
 And the true image of your conscience, shown
 As now I see it in your acts. I see
 A drunken sentinel who gives alarm
 At his own shadow, but when scalers snatch
 His weapon from his hand smiles idiot-like
 At games he 's dreaming of.

DON SILVA.

A parable!
 The husk is rough, — holds something bitter,
 doubtless.

PRIOR.

Oh, the husk gapes with meaning over-ripe.
 You boast a conscience that controls your deeds,
 Watches your knightly armour, guards your rank
 From stain of treachery, — you, helpless slave,
 Whose will lies nerveless in the clutch of lust, —
 Of blind mad passion, — passion itself most helpless,
 Storm-driven, like the monsters of the sea.
 Oh famous conscience!

DON SILVA.

Pause there! Leave unsaid
 Aught that will match that text. More were too
 much,
 Even from holy lips. I own no love
 But such as guards my honour, since it guards
 Hers whom I love! I suffer no foul words
 To stain the gift I lay before her feet;
 And, being hers, my honour is more safe.

PRIOR.

Verse-makers' talk! fit for a world of rhymes,
 Where facts are feigned to tickle idle ears,
 Where good and evil play at tournament
 And end in amity, — a world of lies, —
 A carnival of words where every year
 Stale falsehoods serve fresh men. Your honour
 safe?
 What honour has a man with double bonds?
 Honour is shifting as the shadows are
 To souls that turn their passions into laws.
 A Christian knight who weds an infidel . . .

DON SILVA (*fiercely*).

An infidel!

PRIOR.

May one day spurn the Cross,
 And call that honour! — one day find his sword
 Stained with his brother's blood, and call that
 honour!
 Apostates' honour? — harlots' chastity!
 Renegades' faithfulness? — Iscariot's!

DON SILVA.

Strong words and burning; but they scorch not me.
 Fedalma is a daughter of the Church, —
 Has been baptized and nurtured in the faith.

PRIOR.

Ay, as a thousand Jewesses, who yet
 Are brides of Satan in a robe of flames.

DON SILVA.

Fedalma is no Jewess, bears no marks
 That tell of Hebrew blood.

PRIOR.

She bears the marks

Of races unbaptized, that never bowed
 Before the holy signs, were never moved
 By stirrings of the sacramental gifts.

DON SILVA (*scornfully*).

Holy accusers practise palmistry,
 And, other witness lacking, read the skin.

PRIOR.

I read a record deeper than the skin.
 What! Shall the trick of nostrils and of lips
 Descend through generations, and the soul
 That moves within our frame like God in worlds —
 Convulsing, urging, melting, withering —
 Inprint no record, leave no documents,
 Of her great history? Shall men bequeath
 The fancies of their palate to their sons,
 And shall the shudder of restraining awe,
 The slow-wept tears of contrite memory,

Faith's prayerful labour, and the food divine
 Of fasts ecstatic, — shall these pass away
 Like wind upon the waters, tracklessly?
 Shall the mere curl of eyelashes remain
 And god-enshrining symbols leave no trace
 Of tremors reverent? — That maiden's blood
 Is as unchristian as the leopard's.

DON SILVA.

Say,
 Unchristian as the Blessed Virgin's blood
 Before the angel spoke the word, "All hail!"

PRIOR (*smiling bitterly*).

Say I not truly? See, your passion weaves
 Already blasphemies!

DON SILVA.

'T is you provoke them.

PRIOR.

I strive, as still the Holy Spirit strives,
 To move the will perverse. But, failing this,
 God commands other means to save our blood,
 To save Castilian glory, — nay, to save
 The name of Christ from blot of traitorous deeds.

DON SILVA.

Of traitorous deeds! Age, kindred, and your cowl
 Give an ignoble license to your tongue.
 As for your threats, fulfil them at your peril.
 'T is you, not I, will gibbet our great name
 To rot in infamy. If I am strong
 In patience now, trust me, I can be strong
 Then in defiance.

PRIOR.

Miserable man!

Your strength will turn to anguish, like the strength
 Of fallen angels. Can you change your blood?
 You are a Christian, with the Christian awe
 In every vein. A Spanish noble, born
 To serve your people and your people's faith.
 Strong, are you? Turn your back upon the Cross, —
 Its shadow is before you. Leave your place:
 Quit the great ranks of knight hood: you will walk
 Forever with a tortured double self,
 A self that will be hungry while you feast,
 Will blush with shame while you are glorified,
 Will feel the ache and chill of desolation,
 Even in the very bosom of your love.
 Mate yourself with this woman, fit for what?
 To make the sport of Moorish palaces
 A lewd Herodias . . .

DON SILVA.

Stop! no other man,
 Priest though he were, had had his throat left free
 For passage of those words. I would have clutched
 His serpent's neck, and flung him out to hell!
 A monk must needs defile the name of love:
 He knows it but as tempting devils paint it.
 You think to scare my love from its resolve
 With arbitrary consequences, strained
 By rancorous effort from the thinnest notes
 Of possibility? — cite hideous lists
 Of sins irrelevant, to frighten me
 With bugbears' names, as women fright a child?
 Poor pallid wisdom, taught by inference
 From blood drained life, where phantom terrors rule,

And all achievement is to leave undone!
 Paint the day dark, make sunshine cold to me,
 Abolish the earth's fairness, prove it all
 A fiction of my eyes, — then, after that,
 Profane Fedalma.

PRIOR.

Oh, there is no need:
 She has profaned herself. Go, raving man,
 And see her dancing now. Go, see your bride
 Flaunting her beauties grossly in the gaze
 Of vulgar idlers, — eking out the show
 Made in the Plaça by a mountebank.
 I hinder you no further.

DON SILVA.

It is false!

PRIOR.

Go, prove it false, then.

[Father Isidor
 Drew on his cowl and turned away. The face
 That flashed anathemas, in swift eclipse
 Seemed Silva's vanished confidence. In haste
 He rushed unsignalled through the corridor
 To where the Duchess once, Fedalma now,
 Had residence retired from din of arms, —
 Knocked, opened, found all empty, — said
 With muffled voice, "Fedalma!" — called more
 loud,
 More oft on Iñez, the old trusted nurse, —
 Then searched the terrace-garden, calling still,
 But heard no answering sound, and saw no face
 Save painted faces staring all unmoved

By agitated tones. He hurried back,
 Giving half-conscious orders as he went
 To page and usher, that they straight should seek
 Lady Fedalma; then with stinging shame
 Wished himself silent; reached again the room
 Where still the Father's menace seemed to hang
 Thickening the air; snatched cloak and pluméd
 hat,
 And grasped, not knowing why, his poniard's
 hilt;
 Then checked himself and said:—]

If he spoke truth!

To know were wound enough, — to see the truth
 Were fire upon the wound. It must be false!
 His hatred saw amiss, or snatched mistake
 In other men's report. I am a fool!
 But where can she be gone? gone secretly?
 And in my absence? Oh, she meant no wrong!
 I am a fool! — But where can she be gone?
 With only Iñez? Oh, she meant no wrong!
 I swear she never meant it. There's no wrong
 But she would make it momentary right
 By innocence in doing it. . . .

And yet,

What is our certainty? Why, knowing all
 That is not secret. Mighty confidence!
 One pulse of Time makes the base hollow, — sends
 The towering certainty we built so high
 Toppling in fragments meaningless. What is —
 What will be — must be — pooh! they wait the
 key
 Of that which is not yet; all other keys
 Are made of our conjectures, take their sense
 From humours fooled by hope, or by despair.



*“ Fedalma entered, cast away the cloud
Of serge and linen, and, outbeaming bright
Advanced a pace towards Silva.”*

Photo-Etching.—From Painting by W. St. John Harper.





Know what is good? Oh God, we know not yet
 If bliss itself is not young misery
 With fangs swift growing. . . .

But some outward harm
 May even now be hurting, grieving her.
 Oh, I must search, — face shame, — if shame be there.
 Here, Perez! hasten to Don Alvar, — tell him
 Lady Fedalma must be sought, — is lost, —
 Has met, I fear, some mischance. He must send
 Towards divers points. I go myself to seek
 First in the town. . . .

[As Perez oped the door,
 Then moved aside for passage of the Duke,
 Fedalma entered, cast away the cloud
 Of serge and linen, and, outbeaming bright,
 Advanced a pace towards Silva, — but then paused,
 For he had started and retreated; she,
 Quick and responsive as the subtle air
 To change in him, divined that she must wait
 Until they were alone: they stood and looked.
 Within the Duke was struggling confluence
 Of feelings manifold, — pride, anger, dread,
 Meeting in stormy rush with sense secure
 That she was present, with the satisfied thirst
 Of gazing love, with trust inevitable
 As in beneficent virtues of the light
 And all earth's sweetness, that Fedalma's soul
 Was free from blemishing purpose. Yet proud
 wrath
 Leaped in dark flood above the purer stream
 That strove to drown it: Anger seeks its prey, —
 Something to tear with sharp-edged tooth and
 claw,
 Likes not to go off hungry, leaving Love

To feast on milk and honeycomb at will.
 Silva's heart said, he must be happy soon,
 She being there; but to be happy, — first
 He must be angry, having cause. Yet love
 Shot like a stifled cry of tenderness
 All through the harshness he would fain have
 given
 To the dear word,]

DON SILVA.

Fedalma!

FEDALMA.

O my Lord!

You are come back, and I was wandering!

DON SILVA (*coldly, but with suppressed agitation*).
 You meant I should be ignorant.

FEDALMA.

Oh no,

I should have told you after, — not before,
 Lest you should hinder me.

DON SILVA.

Then my known wish

Can make no hindrance?

FEDALMA (*archly*).

That depends

On what the wish may be. You wished me once
 Not to uncage the birds. I meant to obey:
 But in a moment something — something stronger,
 Forced me to let them out. It did no harm.
 They all came back again, — the silly birds!
 I told you, after.

DON SILVA (*with haughty coldness*).

Will you tell me now
What was the prompting stronger than my wish
That made you wander?

FEDALMA (*advancing a step towards him, with a
sudden look of anxiety*).

Are you angry?

DON SILVA (*smiling bitterly*).

Angry?

A man deep-wounded may feel too much pain
To feel much anger.

FEDALMA (*still more anxiously*).

You — deep-wounded?

DON SILVA.

Yes!

Have I not made your place and dignity
The very heart of my ambition? You, —
No enemy could do it, — you alone
Can strike it mortally.

FEDALMA.

Nay, Silva, nay.
Has some one told you false? I only went
To see the world with Iñez, — see the town,
The people, everything. It was no harm.
I did not mean to dance: it happened so
At last . . .

DON SILVA.

O God, it's true, then! — true that you,
A maiden nurtured as rare flowers are,

The very air of heaven sifted fine
 Lest any mote should mar your purity,
 Have flung yourself out on the dusty way
 For common eyes to see your beauty soiled!
 You own it true, — you danced upon the Praça?

FEDALMA (*proudly*).

Yes, it is true. I was not wrong to dance.
 The air was filled with music, with a song
 That seemed the voice of the sweet eventide, —
 The glowing light entering through eye and ear, —
 That seemed our love, — mine, yours, — they are
 but one, —
 Trembling through all my limbs, as fervent words
 Tremble within my soul and must be spoken.
 And all the people felt a common joy
 And shouted for the dance. A brightness soft
 As of the angels moving down to see
 Illumined the broad space. The joy, the life
 Around, within me, were one heaven: I longed
 To blend them visibly: I longed to dance
 Before the people, — be as mounting flame
 To all that burned within them! Nay, I danced;
 There was no longing: I but did the deed
 Being moved to do it.

(*As FEDALMA speaks, she and DON SILVA are gradually drawn nearer to each other.*)

Oh, I seemed new-waked
 To life in unison with a multitude, —
 Feeling my soul upborne by all their souls,
 Floating within their gladness! Soon I lost
 All sense of separateness: Fedalma died
 As a star dies, and melts into the light.
 I was not, but joy was, and love and triumph.

Nay, my dear lord, I never could do aught
 But I must feel you present. And once done,
 Why, you must love it better than your wish.
 I pray you, say so, — say, it was not wrong!

(While FEDALMA has been making this last appeal, they have gradually come close together, and at last embrace.)

DON SILVA *(holding her hands)*.

Dangerous rebel! if the world without
 Were pure as that within . . . but 't is a book
 Wherein you only read the poesy
 And miss all wicked meanings. Hence the need
 For trust — obedience — call it what you will —
 Towards him whose life will be your guard, — to-
 wards me
 Who now am soon to be your husband.

FEDALMA.

Yes!

That very thing that when I am your wife
 I shall be something different, — shall be
 I know not what, a duchess with new thoughts, —
 For nobles never think like common men,
 Nor wives like maidens (oh, you wot not yet
 How much I note, with all my ignorance), —
 That very thing has made me more resolve
 To have my will before I am your wife.
 How can the Duchess ever satisfy
 Fedalma's unwed eyes? and so to-day
 I scolded Iñez till she cried and went.

DON SILVA.

It was a guilty weakness: she knows well
 That since you pleaded to be left more free

From tedious tendance and control of dames
 Whose rank matched better with your destiny,
 Her charge — my trust — was weightier.

FEDALMA.

Nay, my lord,
 You must not blame her, dear old nurse. She cried.
 Why, you would have consented too, at last.
 I said such things! I was resolved to go,
 And see the streets, the shops, the men at work,
 The women, little children, — everything,
 Just as it is when nobody looks on.
 And I have done it! We were out four hours.
 I feel so wise.

DON SILVA.

Had you but seen the town,
 You innocent naughtiness, not shown yourself, —
 Shown yourself dancing, — you bewilder me! —
 Frustrate my judgment with strange negatives
 That seem like poverty, and yet are wealth
 In precious womanliness, beyond the dower
 Of other women: wealth in virgin gold,
 Outweighing all their petty currency.
 You daring modesty! You shrink no more
 From gazing men than from the gazing flowers
 That, dreaming sunshine, open as you pass.

FEDALMA.

No, I should like the world to look at me
 With eyes of love that make a second day.
 I think your eyes would keep the life in me
 Though I had naught to feed on else. Their blue
 Is better than the heavens', — hold more love
 For me, Fedalma, — is a little heaven
 For this one little world that looks up now.

DON SILVA.

O precious little world! you make the heaven
As the earth makes the sky. But, dear, all eyes,
Though looking even on you, have not a glance
That cherishes . . .

FEDALMA.

Ah no, I meant to tell you, —
Tell how my dancing ended with a pang.
There came a man, one among many more,
But *he* came first, with iron on his limbs.
And when the bell tolled, and the people prayed,
And I stood pausing, — then he looked at me.
O Silva, such a man! I thought he rose
From the dark place of long-imprisoned souls,
To say that Christ had never come to them.
It was a look to shame a seraph's joy
And make him sad in heaven. It found me there, —
Seemed to have travelled far to find me there
And grasp me, — claim this festal life of mine
As heritage of sorrow, chill my blood
With the cold iron of some unknown bonds.
The gladness hurrying full within my veins
Was sudden frozen, and I danced no more.
But seeing you let loose the stream of joy,
Mingling the present with the sweetest past.
Yet, Silva, still I see him. Who is he?
Who are those prisoners with him? Are they
Moors?

DON SILVA.

No, they are Gypsies, strong and cunning knaves,
A double gain to us by the Moors' loss:
The man you mean — their chief — is an ally

The infidel will miss. His look might chase
 A herd of monks, and make them fly more swift
 Than from St. Jerome's lion. Such vague fear,
 Such bird-like tremors when that savage glance
 Turned full upon you in your height of joy
 Was natural, was not worth emphasis.
 Forget it, dear. This hour is worth whole days
 When we are sundered. Danger urges us
 To quick resolve.

FEDALMA.

What danger? What resolve?
 I never felt chill shadow in my heart
 Until this sunset.

DON SILVA.

A dark enmity
 Plots how to sever us. And our defence
 Is speedy marriage, secretly achieved,
 Then publicly declared. Beseech you, dear,
 Grant me this confidence; do my will in this,
 Trusting the reasons why I overset
 All my own airy building raised so high
 Of bridal honours, marking when you step
 From off your maiden throne to come to me
 And bear the yoke of love. There is great need.
 I hastened home, carrying this prayer to you
 Within my heart. The bishop is my friend,
 Furthers our marriage, holds in enmity —
 Some whom we love not and who love not us.
 By this night's moon our priest will be de-
 spatched
 From Jaën. I shall march an escort strong
 To meet him. Ere a second sun from this
 Has risen — you consenting — we may wed.

FEDALMA.

None knowing that we wed ?

DON SILVA.

Beforehand none
 Save Iñez and Don Alvar. But the vows
 Once safely binding us, my household all
 Shall know you as their Duchess. No man then
 Can aim a blow at you but through my breast,
 And what stains you must stain our ancient name ;
 If any hate you I will take his hate
 And wear it as a glove upon my helm ;
 Nay, God himself will never have the power
 To strike you solely and leave me unhurt,
 He having made us one. Now put the seal
 Of your dear lips on that.

FEDALMA.

A solemn kiss ?—

Such as I gave you when you came that day
 From Córdoba, when first we said we loved ?
 When you had left the ladies of the court
 For thirst to see me ; and you told me so ;
 And then I seemed to know why I had lived.
 I never knew before. A kiss like that ?

DON SILVA.

Yes, yes, you face divine ! When was our kiss
 Like any other ?

FEDALMA.

Nay, I cannot tell
 What other kisses are. But that one kiss
 Remains upon my lips. The angels, spirits,

Creatures with finer sense, may see it there.
 And now another kiss that will not die,
 Saying, To-morrow I shall be your wife!

(They kiss, and pause a moment, looking earnestly in each other's eyes. Then FEDALMA, breaking away from DON SILVA, stands at a little distance from him with a look of roguish delight.)

Now I am glad I saw the town to-day
 Before I am a Duchess, — glad I gave
 This poor Fedalma all her wish. For once,
 Long years ago, I cried when Iñez said,
 "You are no more a little girl;" I grieved
 To part forever from that little girl
 And all her happy world so near the ground.
 It must be sad to outlive aught we love.
 So I shall grieve a little for these days
 Of poor unwed Fedalma. Oh, they are sweet,
 And none will come just like them. Perhaps the
 wind

Wails so in winter for the summers dead,
 And all sad sounds are nature's funeral cries
 For what has been and is not. Are they, Silva?

(She comes nearer to him again, and lays her hand on his arm, looking up at him with melancholy.)

DON SILVA.

Why, dearest, you began in merriment,
 And end as sadly as a widowed bird.
 Some touch mysterious has new-tuned your soul
 To melancholy sequence. You soared high
 In that wild flight of rapture when you danced,
 And now you droop. 'Tis arbitrary grief,

Surfeit of happiness, that mourns for loss
 Of unwed love, which does but die like seed
 For fuller harvest of our tenderness.
 We in our wedded life shall know no loss.
 We shall new-date our years. What went before
 Will be the time of promise, shadows, dreams;
 But this, full revelation of great love.
 For rivers blent take in a broader heaven,
 And we shall blend our souls. Away with grief!
 When this dear head shall wear the double crown
 Of wife and Duchess, — spiritually crowned
 With sworn espousal before God and man, —
 Visibly crowned with jewels that bespeak
 The chosen sharer of my heritage, —
 My love will gather perfectness, as thoughts
 That nourish us to magnanimity
 Grow perfect with more perfect utterance,
 Gathering full-shapen strength. And then these
 gems,

(DON SILVA *draws* FEDALMA *towards the jewel-
 casket on the table, and opens it.*)

Helping the utterance of my soul's full choice,
 Will be the words made richer by just use,
 And have new meaning in their lustrousness.
 You know these jewels; they are precious sigus
 Of long-transmitted honour, heightened still
 By worthy wearing; and I give them you, —
 Ask you to take them, — place our house's trust
 In her sure keeping whom my heart has found
 Worthiest, most beauteous. These rubies — see —
 Were falsely placed if not upon your brow.

(FEDALMA, *while* DON SILVA *holds open the
 casket, bends over it, looking at the jewels
 with delight.*)

FEDALMA.

Ah, I remember them. In childish days
 I felt as if they were alive and breathed.
 I used to sit with awe and look at them.
 And now they will be mine! I'll put them on.
 Help me, my lord, and you shall see me now
 Somewhat as I shall look at Court with you,
 That we may know if I shall bear them well.
 I have a fear sometimes: I think your love
 Has never paused within your eyes to look,
 And only passes through them into mine.
 But when the Court is looking, and the queen,
 Your eyes will follow theirs. Oh, if you saw
 That I was other than you wished,— 't were death!

DON SILVA (*taking up a jewel and placing it
 against her ear*).

Nay, let us try. Take out your ear-ring, sweet.
 This ruby glows with longing for your ear.

FEDALMA (*taking out her ear-rings, and then lifting
 up the other jewels, one by one*).

Pray, fasten in the rubies.

(DON SILVA *begins to put in the ear-ring*.)

I was right!

These gems have life in them: their colours speak,
 Say what words fail of. So do many things,—
 The scent of jasmine, and the fountain's plash,
 The moving shadows on the far-off hills,
 The slanting moonlight and our clasping hands.
 O Silva, there 's an ocean round our words
 That overflows and drowns them. Do you know

Sometimes when we sit silent, and the air
Breathes gently on us from the orange-trees,
It seems that with the whisper of a word
Our souls must shrink, get poorer, more apart.
Is it not true?

DON SILVA.

Yes, dearest, it is true.
Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken: even your loved words
Float in the larger meaning of your voice
As something dimmer.

(He is still trying in vain to fasten the second ear-ring, while she has stooped again over the casket.)

FEDALMA *(raising her head)*.

Ah! your lordly hands
Will never fix that jewel. Let me try.
Women's small finger-tips have eyes.

DON SILVA.

No, no!

I like the task, only you must be still.

(She stands perfectly still, clasping her hands together while he fastens the second ear-ring. Suddenly a clanking noise is heard without.)

FEDALMA *(starting with an expression of pain)*.

What is that sound? — that jarring cruel sound?
'T is there, — outside.

(She tries to start away towards the window but DON SILVA detains her.)

DON SILVA.

Oh heed it not, it comes
From workmen in the outer gallery.

FEDALMA.

It is the sound of fetters: sound of work
Is not so dismal. Hark, they pass along!
I know it is those Gypsy prisoners.
I saw them, heard their chains. Oh horrible,
To be in chains! Why, I with all my bliss
Have longed sometimes to fly and be at large,
Have felt imprisoned in my luxury
With servants for my jailers. O my lord,
Do you not wish the world were different?

DON SILVA.

It will be different when this war has ceased.
You, wedding me, will make it different,
Making one life more perfect.

FEDALMA.

That is true!
And I shall beg much kindness at your hands
For those who are less happy than ourselves.—
(*Brightening.*) Oh, I shall rule you! ask for many
things
Before the world, which you will not deny
For very pride, lest men should say, "The Duke
Holds lightly by his Duchess; he repents
His humble choice."

(*She breaks away from him and returns to the
jewels, taking up a necklace, and clasping it
on her neck, while he takes a circlet of dia-
monds and rubies and raises it towards her
head as he speaks.*)

DON SILVA.

Doubtless, I shall persist
 In loving you, to disappoint the world;
 Out of pure obstinaey feel myself
 Happiest of men. Now, take the coronet.

(He places the circlet on her head.)

The diamonds want more light. See, from this
 lamp
 I can set tapers burning.

F'EDALMA.

Tell me, now,
 When all these cruel wars are at an end,
 And when we go to Court at Córdoba,
 Or Seville, or Toledo, — wait awhile,
 I must be farther off for you to see, —

*(She retreats to a distance from him, and then
 advances slowly.)*

Now think (I would the tapers gave more light!)
 If when you show me at the tournaments
 Among the other ladies, they will say,
 “Duke Silva is well matched. His bride was
 naught,
 Was some poor foster-child, no man knows what;
 Yet is her carriage noble, all her robes
 Are worn with grace: she might have been well
 born.”

Will they say so? Think now we are at Court,
 And all eyes bent on me.

DON SILVA.

Fear not, my Duchess!
 Some knight who loves may say his lady-love
 Is fairer, being fairest. None can say

Don Silva's bride might better fit her rank.
 You will make rank seem natural as kind,
 As eagle's plumage or the lion's might.
 A crown upon your brow would seem God-made.

FEDALMA.

Then I am glad! I shall try on to-night
 The other jewels,— have the tapers lit,
 And see the diamonds sparkle.

(She goes to the casket again.)

Here is gold, —

A necklace of pure gold, — most finely wrought.

*(She takes out a large gold necklace and holds
 it up before her, then turns to DON SILVA.)*

But this is one that you have worn, my lord?

DON SILVA.

No, love, I never wore it. Lay it down.

*(He puts the necklace gently out of her hand,
 then joins both her hands and holds them
 up between his own.)*

You must not look at jewels any more,
 But look at me.

FEDALMA *(looking up at him)*.

O you dear heaven!

I should see naught if you were gone. 'T is true
 My mind is too much given to gauds, — to things
 That fetter thought within this narrow space.
 That comes of fear.

DON SILVA.

What fear?

FEDALMA.

Fear of myself.

For when I walk upon the battlements
 And see the river travelling toward the plain,
 The mountains screening all the world beyond,
 A longing comes that haunts me in my dreams,—
 Dreams where I seem to spring from off the walls,
 And fly far, far away, until at last
 I find myself alone among the rocks,
 Remember then that I have left you,— try
 To fly back to you,— and my wings are gone!

DON SILVA.

A wicked dream! If ever I left you,
 Even in dreams, it was some demon dragged me,
 And with fierce struggles I awaked myself.

FEDALMA.

It is a hateful dream, and when it comes,—
 I mean, when in my waking hours there comes
 That longing to be free, I am afraid:
 I run down to my chamber, plait my hair,
 Weave colours in it, lay out all my gauds,
 And in my mind make new ones prettier.
 You see I have two minds, and both are foolish.
 Sometimes a torrent rushing through my soul
 Escapes in wild strange wishes; presently,
 It dwindles to a little babbling rill
 And plays among the pebbles and the flowers.
 Iñez will have it I lack broidery,
 Says naught else gives content to noble maids.
 But I have never broidered,— never will.
 No, when I am a Duchess and a wife
 I shall ride forth — may I not? — by your side.

DON SILVA.

Yes, you shall ride upon a palfrey, black
 To match Bavioca. Not Queen Isabel
 Will be a sight more gladdening to men's eyes,
 Than my dark queen Fedalma.

FEDALMA.

Ah, but you,
 You are my king, and I shall tremble still
 With some great fear that throbs within my love.
 Does your love fear?

DON SILVA.

Ah, yes! all preciousness
 To mortal hearts is guarded by a fear.
 All love fears loss, and most that loss supreme,
 Its own perfection,—seeing, feeling change
 From high to lower, dearer to less dear.
 Can love be careless? If we lost our love
 What should we find?—with this sweet Past torn off,
 Our lives deep scarred just where their beauty lay?
 The best we found thenceforth were still a worse:
 The only better is a Past that lives
 On through an added Present, stretching still
 In hope unchecked by shaming memories
 To life's last breath. And so I tremble too
 Before my queen Fedalma.

FEDALMA.

That is just.
 'T were hard of Love to make us women fear
 And leave you bold. Yet Love is not quite even.
 For feeble creatures, little birds and fawns,
 Are shaken more by fear, while large strong things
 Can bear it stoutly. So we women still

Are not well dealt with. Yet would I choose to be
 Fedalma loving Silva. You, my lord,
 Hold the worse share, since you must love poor me.
 But is it what we love, or how we love,
 That makes true good?

DON SILVA.

O subtlety! for me
 'T is what I love determines how I love.
 The goddess with pure rites reveals herself
 And makes pure worship.

FEDALMA.

Do you worship me?

DON SILVA.

Ay, with that best of worship which adores
 Goodness adorable.

FEDALMA (*archly*).

Goodness obedient,
 Doing your will, devoutest worshipper?

DON SILVA.

Yes,—listening to this prayer. This very night
 I shall go forth. And you will rise with day
 And wait for me?

FEDALMA.

Yes.

DON SILVA.

I shall surely come.
 And then we shall be married. Now I go
 To audience fixed in Abderahman's tower.
 Farewell, love! (*They embrace.*)

FEDALMA.

Some chill dread possesses me!

DON SILVA.

Oh, confidence has oft been evil augury,
So dread may hold a promise. Sweet, farewell!
I shall send tendance as I pass, to bear
This casket to your chamber. — One more kiss.

(Exit.)

FEDALMA (*when DON SILVA is gone, returning to the casket, and looking dreamily at the jewels.*)

Yes, now that good seems less impossible!
Now it seems true that I shall be his wife,
Be ever by his side, and make a part
In all his purposes. . . .
These rubies greet me Duchess. How they glow!
Their prisoned souls are throbbing like my own.
Perchance they loved once, were ambitious, proud;
Or do they only dream of wider life,
Ache from intenseness, yearn to burst the wall
Compact of crystal splendour, and to flood
Some wider space with glory? Poor, poor gems!
We must be patient in our prison-house,
And find our space in loving. Pray you, love me.
Let us be glad together. And you, gold, —

(She takes up the gold necklace.)

You wondrous necklace, — will you love me too,
And be my amulet to keep me safe
From eyes that hurt?

(She spreads out the necklace, meaning to clasp it on her neck. Then pauses, startled, holding it before her.)

Why, it is magical!

He says he never wore it, — yet these lines, —
 Nay, if he had, I should remember well
 'T was he, no other. And these twisted lines, —
 They seem to speak to me as writing would,
 To bring a message from the dead, dead past.
 What is their secret? Are they characters?
 I never learned them; yet they stir some sense
 That once I dreamed, — I have forgotten what.
 Or was it life? Perhaps I lived before
 In some strange world where first my soul was
 shaped,
 And all this passionate love, and joy, and pain,
 That come, I know not whence, and sway my
 deeds,
 Are dim yet mastering memories, blind yet strong,
 That this world stirs within me; as this chain
 Stirs some strange certainty of visions gone,
 And all my mind is as an eye that stares
 Into the darkness painfully.

(While FEDALMA has been looking at the necklace, JUAN has entered, and finding himself unobserved by her, says at last,)

Señora!

FEDALMA starts, and gathering the necklace together
 turns round —

O Juan, it is you!

JUAN.

I met the Duke, —
 Had waited long without, no matter why, —
 And when he ordered one to wait on you
 And carry forth a burden you would give,
 I prayed for leave to be the servitor.

Don Silva owes me twenty granted wishes
 That I have never tendered, lacking aught
 That I could wish for and a Duke could grant ;
 But this one wish to serve you, weighs as much
 As twenty other longings.

FEDALMA (*smiling*).

That sounds well.
 You turn your speeches prettily as songs.
 But I will not forget the many days
 You have neglected me. Your pupil learns
 But little from you now. Her studies flag.
 The Duke says, " That is idle Juan's way :
 Poets must rove, — are honey-sucking birds
 And know not constancy." Said he quite true ?

JUAN.

O lady, constancy has kind and rank.
 One man's is lordly, plump, and bravely clad,
 Holds its head high, and tells the world its
 name :
 Another man's is beggared, must go bare,
 And shiver through the world, the jest of all,
 But that it puts the motley on, and plays
 Itself the jester. But I see you hold
 The Gypsy's necklace : it is quaintly wrought.

FEDALMA.

The Gypsy's ? Do you know its history ?

JUAN.

No further back than when I saw it taken
 From off its wearer's neck, — the Gypsy chief's.

FEDALMA (*eagerly*).

What! he who paused, at tolling of the bell,
Before me in the Plaça?

JUAN.

Yes, I saw

His look fixed on you.

FEDALMA.

Know you aught of him?

JUAN.

Something and nothing,—as I know the sky,
Or some great story of the olden time
That hides a secret. I have oft talked with
him.

He seems to say much, yet is but a wizard
Who draws down rain by sprinkling; throws me
out

Some pregnant text that urges comment; casts
A sharp-hooked question, baited with such skill
It needs must catch the answer.

FEDALMA.

It is hard

That such a man should be a prisoner,—
Be chained to work.

JUAN.

Oh, he is dangerous!

Granáda with this Zarcá for a king
Might still maim Christendom. He is of those
Who steal the keys from snoring Destiny

And make the prophets lie. A Gypsy, too,
Suckled by hunted beasts, whose mother-milk
Has filled his veins with hate.

FEDALMA.

I thought his eyes
Spoke not of hatred, — seemed to say he bore
The pain of those who never could be saved.
What if the Gypsies are but savage beasts
And must be hunted? — let them be set free,
Have benefit of chase, or stand at bay
And fight for life and offspring. Prisoners!
Oh, they have made their fires beside the streams,
Their walls have been the rocks, the pillared pines,
Their roof the living sky that breathes with
light:
They may well hate a cage, like strong-winged
birds,
Like me, who have no wings, but only wishes.
I will beseech the Duke to set them free.

JUAN.

Pardon me, lady, if I seem to warn,
Or try to play the sage. What if the Duke
Loved not to hear of Gypsies? if their name
Were poisoned for him once, being used amiss?
I speak not as of fact. Our nimble souls
Can spin an insubstantial universe
Suiting our mood, and call it possible,
Sooner than see one grain with eye exact
And give strict record of it. Yet by chance
Our fancies may be truth and make us seers.
'T is a rare teeming world, so harvest-full,
Even guessing ignorance may pluck some fruit.
Note what I say no further than will stead

The siege you lay. I would not seem to tell
 Aught that the Duke may think and yet withhold:
 It were a trespass in me.

FEDALMA.

Fear not, Juan.

Your words bring daylight with them when you
 speak.

I understand your care. But I am brave,—
 Oh, and so cunning!—always I prevail.
 Now, honoured Troubadour, if you will be
 Your pupil's servant, bear this casket hence.
 Nay, not the necklace: it is hard to place.
 Pray go before me; Iñez will be there.

(Exit JUAN with the casket.)

FEDALMA *(looking again at the necklace)*.

It is *his* past clings to you, not my own.
 If we have each our angels, good and bad,
 Fates, separate from ourselves, who act for us
 When we are blind, or sleep, then this man's fate,
 Hovering about the thing he used to wear,
 Has laid its grasp on mine appealingly.
 Dangerous, is he?—well, a Spanish knight
 Would have his enemy strong,—defy, not bind
 him.

I can dare all things when my soul is moved
 By something hidden that possesses me.
 If Silva said this man must keep his chains
 I should find ways to free him,—disobey
 And free him as I did the birds. But no!
 As soon as we are wed, I'll put my prayer,
 And he will not deny me: he is good.
 Oh, I shall have much power as well as joy!
 Duchess Fedalma may do what she will.

A Street by the Castle. JUAN leans against a parapet, in moonlight, and touches his lute half unconsciously. PEPITA stands on tiptoe watching him, and then advances till her shadow falls in front of him. He looks towards her. A piece of white drapery thrown over her head catches the moonlight.

JUAN.

Ha! my Pepita! see how thin and long
Your shadow is. 'T is so your ghost will be,
When you are dead.

PEPITA (*crossing herself*).

Dead! — Oh the blessed saints!
You would be glad, then, if Pepita died?

JUAN.

Glad! why? Dead maidens are not merry. Ghosts
Are doleful company. I like you living.

PEPITA.

I think you like me not. I wish you did.
Sometimes you sing to me and make me dance.
Another time you take no heed of me,
Not though I kiss my hand to you and smile.
But Andrès would be glad if I kissed *him*.

JUAN.

My poor Pepita, I am old.

PEPITA.

No, no.

You have no wrinkles.

JUAN.

Yes, I have — within ;
The wrinkles are within, my little bird.
Why, I have lived through twice a thousand years,
And kept the company of men whose bones
Crumbled before the blessed Virgin lived.

PEPITA (*crossing herself*).

Nay, God defend us, that is wicked talk !
You say it but to scorn me. (*With a sob.*) I
will go.

JUAN.

Stay, little pigeon. I am not unkind.
Come, sit upon the wall. Nay, never cry.
Give me your cheek to kiss. There, cry no more !

(*PEPITA, sitting on the low parapet, puts up
her cheek to JUAN, who kisses it, putting his
hand under her chin. She takes his hand
and kisses it.*)

PEPITA.

I like to kiss your hand. It is so good,—
So smooth and soft.

JUAN.

Well, well, I 'll sing to you.

PEPITA.

A pretty song, loving and merry ?

JUAN.

Yes.

(JUAN sings.)

*Memory,
Tell to me
What is fair,
Past compare,
In the land of Tubal?*

*Is it Spring's
Lovely things,
Blossoms white,
Rosy dight?
Then it is Pepita.*

*Summer's crest
Red-gold tressed,
Corn-flowers peeping under? —
Idle noons,
Lingering moons,
Sudden cloud,
Lightning's shroud,
Sudden rain,
Quick again
Smiles where late was thunder? —*

*Are all these
Made to please?
So too is Pepita.*

*Autumn's prime,
Apple-time,
Smooth cheek round,
Heart all sound? —
Is it this
You would kiss?
Then it is Pepita.*

*You can bring
No sweet thing,
But my mind
Still shall find
It is my Pepita.*

*Memory
Says to me
It is she, —
She is fair
Past compare
In the land of Tubal.*

PEPIAT (*seizing JUAN'S hand again*).

Oh, then, you do love me?

JUAN.

Yes, in the song.

PEPITA (*sadly*).

Not out of it? — not love me out of it?

JUAN.

Only a little out of it, my bird.
When I was singing I was Andrès, say,
Or one who loves you better still than Andrès.

PEPITA.

Not yourself?

JUAN.

No!

*

PEPITA (*throwing his hand down pettishly*).

Then take it back again!

I will not have it!

JUAN.

Listen, little one.

Juan is not a living man all by himself:
 His life is breathed in him by other men,
 And they speak out of him. He is their voice.
 Juan's own life he gave once quite away.
 It was Pepita's lover singing then,— not Juan.
 We old, old poets, if we kept our hearts,
 Should hardly know them from another man's.
 They shrink to make room for the many more
 We keep within us. There, now,—one more
 kiss,
 And then go home again.

PEPITA (*a little frightened, after letting JUAN
 kiss her*).

You are not wicked?

JUAN.

Ask your confessor,— tell him what I said.

(PEPITA goes, while JUAN thrums his lute
 again, and sings.)

*Came a pretty maid
 By the moon's pure light,
 Loved me well, she said,
 Eyes with tears all bright,
 A pretty maid!*

*But too late she strayed,
 Moonlight pure was there;
 She was naught but shade
 Hiding the more fair,
 The heavenly maid!*

A vaulted room all stone. The light shed from a high lamp. Wooden chairs, a desk, book-shelves. The PRIOR, in white frock, a black rosary with a crucifix of ebony and ivory at his side, is walking up and down, holding a written paper in his hands, which are clasped behind him.

What if this witness lies? he says he heard her
 Counting her blasphemies on a rosary,
 And in a bold discourse with Salomo,
 Say that the Host was naught but ill-mixed flour,
 That it was mean to pray, — she never prayed.
 I know the man who wrote this for a cur,
 Who follows Don Diego, sees life's good
 In scraps my nephew flings to him. What then?
 Particular lies may speak a general truth.
 I guess him false, but know her heretic, —
 Know her for Satan's instrument, bedecked
 With heathenish charms, luring the souls of men
 To damning trust in good unsanctified.
 Let her be prisoned, — questioned, — she will give
 Witness against herself, that were this false . . .

*(He looks at the paper again and reads, then
 again thrusts it behind him.)*

The matter and the colour are not false:
 The form concerns the witness, not the judge;
 For proof is gathered by the sifting mind,
 Not given in crude and formal circumstance.
 Suspicion is a heaven-sent lamp, and I, —
 I, watchman of the Holy Office, bear
 That lamp in trust. I will keep faithful watch.
 The Holy Inquisition's discipline
 Is mercy, saving her, if penitent, —
 God grant it! — else, — root up the poison-plant,

Though 't were a lily with a golden heart !
 This spotless maiden with her pagan soul
 Is the arch-enemy's trap: he turns his back
 On all the prostitutes, and watches her
 To see her poison men with false belief
 In rebel virtues. She has poisoned Silva ;
 His shifting mind, dangerous in fitfulness,
 Strong in the contradiction of itself,
 Carries his young ambitions wearily,
 As holy vows regretted. Once he seemed
 The fresh-oped flower of Christian knight-hood, born
 For feats of holy daring ; and I said :
 " That half of life which I, as monk, renounce,
 Shall be fulfilled in him : Silva will be
 That saintly noble, that wise warrior,
 That blameless excellence in worldly gifts
 I would have been, had I not asked to live
 The higher life of man impersonal
 Who reigns o'er all things by refusing all.
 What is his promise now ? Apostasy
 From every high intent : — languid, nay, gone,
 The prompt devoutness of a generous heart,
 The strong obedience of a reverent will,
 That breathes the Church's air and sees her light,
 He peers and strains with feeble questioning,
 Or else he jests. He thinks I know it not, —
 I who have read the history of his lapse,
 As clear as it is writ in the angel's book.
 He will defy me, — flings great words at me, —
 Me who have governed all our house's acts,
 Since I, a stripling, ruled his stripling father.
 This maiden is the cause, and if they wed,
 The Holy War may count a captain lost.
 For better he were dead than keep his place,
 And fill it infamously : in God's war

Slackness is infamy. Shall I stand by
 And let the tempter win? defraud Christ's cause,
 And blot his banner? — all for scruples weak
 Of pity towards their young and frolicsome blood;
 Or nice discrimination of the tool
 By which my hand shall work a sacred rescue?
 The fence of rules is for the purblind crowd;
 They walk by averaged precepts; sovereign men,
 Seeing by God's light, see the general
 By seeing all the special, — own no rule
 But their full vision of the moment's worth.
 'T is so God governs, using wicked men, —
 Nay, scheming fiends, to work his purposes.
 Evil that good may come? Measure the good
 Before you say what's evil. Perjury?
 I scorn the perjurer, but I will use him
 To serve the holy truth. There is no lie
 Save in his soul, and let his soul be judged.
 I know the truth, and act upon the truth.

O God, thou knowest that my will is pure.
 Thy servant owns naught for himself, his wealth
 Is but obedience. And I have sinned
 In keeping small respects of human love, —
 Calling it mercy. Mercy? Where evil is
 True mercy must be terrible. Mercy would save.
 Save whom? Save serpents, locusts, wolves?
 Or out of pity let the idiots gorge
 Within a famished town? Or save the gains
 Of men who trade in poison lest they starve?
 Save all things mean and foul that clog the earth
 Stifling the better? Save the fools who cling
 For refuge round their hideous idol's limbs,
 So leave the idol grinning unconsumed,
 And save the fools to breed idolaters?

Oh mercy worthy of the licking hound
 That knows no future but its feeding time!
 Mercy has eyes that pierce the ages, — sees
 From heights divine of the eternal purpose
 Far-scattered consequence in its vast sum;
 Chooses to save, but with illumined vision
 Sees that to save is greatly to destroy.
 'Tis so the Holy Inquisition sees: its wrath
 Is fed from the strong heart of wisest love.
 For love must needs make hatred. He who loves
 God and his law must hate the foes of God.
 And I have sinned in being merciful:
 Being slack in hate, I have been slack in love.

*(He takes the crucifix and holds it up before
 him.)*

Thou shuddering, bleeding, thirsting, dying God,
 Thou Man of Sorrows, scourged and bruised and torn,
 Suffering to save, — wilt thou not judge the world?
 This arm which held the children, this pale hand
 That gently touched the eyelids of the blind,
 And opened passive to the cruel nail,
 Shall one day stretch to leftward of thy throne,
 Charged with the power that makes the lightning
 strong,
 And hurl thy foes to everlasting hell.
 And thou, Immaculate Mother, Virgin mild,
 Thou seven-fold pierced, thou pitying, pleading
 Queen,
 Shalt see and smile, while the black filthy souls
 Sink with foul weight to their eternal place,
 Purgings the Holy Light. Yea, I have sinned
 And called it mercy. But I shrink no more.
 To-morrow morn this temptress shall be safe
 Under the Holy Inquisition's key.

He thinks to wed her, and defy me then,
 She being shielded by our house's name.
 But he shall never wed her. I have said.

The time is come. *Exurge, Domine,
 Judica causam tuam.* Let thy foes
 Be driven as the smoke before the wind,
 And melt like wax upon the furnace lip!

*A large chamber richly furnished opening on a
 terrace-garden, the trees visible through the window
 in faint moonlight. Flowers hanging about the
 window, lit up by the tapers. The casket of jewels
 open on a table. The gold necklace lying near.
 FEDALMA, splendidly dressed and adorned with
 pearls and rubies, is walking up and down.*

So soft a night was never made for sleep,
 But for the waking of the finer sense
 To every murmuring and gentle sound,
 To subtlest odours, pulses, visitings
 That touch our frames with wings too delicate
 To be discerned amid the blare of day.

*(She pauses near the window to gather some
 jasmine: then walks again.)*

Surely these flowers keep happy watch, — their
 breath

Is their fond memory of the loving light.
 I often rue the hours I lose in sleep:
 It is a bliss too brief, only to see
 This glorious world, to hear the voice of love,
 To feel the touch, the breath of tenderness,
 And then to rest as from a spectacle.
 I need the curtained stillness of the night

To live through all my happy hours again
 With more selection, — cull them quite away
 From blemished moments. Then in loneliness
 The face that bent before me in the day
 Rises in its own light, more vivid seems
 Painted upon the dark, and ceaseless glows
 With sweet solemnity of gazing love,
 Till like the heavenly blue it seems to grow
 Nearer, more kindred, and more cherishing,
 Mingling with all my being. Then the words,
 The tender low-toned words come back again,
 With repetition welcome as the chime
 Of softly hurrying brooks, — “My only love, —
 My love while life shall last, — my own Fedalma!”
 Oh, it is mine, — the joy that once has been!
 Poor eager hope is but a stammerer,
 Must listen dumbly to great memory,
 Who makes our bliss the sweeter by her telling.

. (*She pauses a moment musingly.*)

But that dumb hope is still a sleeping guard
 Whose quiet rhythmic breath saves me from dread
 In this fair paradise. For if the earth
 Broke off with flower-fringed edge, visibly sheer,
 Leaving no footing for my forward step
 But empty blackness . . .

Nay, there is no fear, —
 They will renew themselves, day and my joy,
 And all that past which is securely mine,
 Will be the hidden root that nourishes
 Our still unfolding, ever-ripening love!

(*While she is uttering the last words, a little
 bird falls softly on the floor behind her;
 she hears the light sound of its fall and
 turns round.*)

“ My father . . . comes . . . my father.”

Photo-Etching.—From Painting by W. St. John Harper.



Did something enter? . . .

Yes, this little bird . . .

(She lifts it.)

Dead and yet warm: 't was seeking sanctuary,
And died, perhaps of fright, at the altar foot.
Stay, there is something tied beneath the wing!
A strip of linen, streaked with blood, — what blood?
The streaks are written words, — are sent to me, —
O God, are sent to me! *Dear child, Fedalma,*
Be brave, give no alarm, — your Father comes!

(She lets the bird fall again.)

My Father . . . comes . . . my Father. . . .

(She turns in quivering expectation toward the window. There is perfect stillness a few moments until ZARCA appears at the window. He enters quickly and noiselessly; then stands still at his full height, and at a distance from FEDALMA.)

FEDALMA *(in a low distinct tone of terror).*

It is he!

I said his fate had laid its hold on mine.

ZARCA *(advancing a step or two).*

You know, then, who I am?

FEDALMA.

The prisoner, —

He whom I saw in fetters, — and this necklace —

ZARCA.

Was played with by your fingers when it hung
About my neck, full fifteen years ago!

FEDALMA (*starts, looks at the necklace and handles it, then speaks as if unconsciously*).

Full fifteen years ago!

ZARCA.

The very day
I lost you, when you wore a tiny gown
Of scarlet cloth with golden broidery:
'T was clasped in front by coins, — two golden
coins.

The one towards the left was split in two
Across the King's head, right from brow to nape,
A dent i' the middle nicking in the cheek.
You see I know the little gown by heart.

FEDALMA (*growing paler and more tremulous*).

Yes. It is true, — I have the gown, — the clasps, —
The braid, — sore tarnished: — it is long ago!

ZARCA.

But yesterday to me; for till to-day
I saw you always as that little child.
And when they took my necklace from me, still
Your fingers played about it on my neck,
And still those buds of fingers on your feet
Caught in its meshes as you seemed to climb
Up to my shoulder. You were not stolen all.
You had a double life fed from my heart. . . .

(FEDALMA, *letting fall the necklace, makes an impulsive movement towards him with outstretched hands*.)

For the Zincalo loves his children well.

FEDALMA (*shrinking, trembling, and letting fall her hands*).

How came it that you sought me, — no, — I mean
How came it that you knew me, — that you lost me?

ZARCA (*standing perfectly still*).

Poor child! I see, I see, — your ragged father
Is welcome as the piercing wintry wind
Within this silken chamber. It is well.
I would not have a child who stooped to feign,
And aped a sudden love. True hate were better.

FEDALMA (*raising her eyes towards him, with a flash
of admiration, and looking at him fixedly*).

Father, how was it that we lost each other?

ZARCA.

I lost you as a man may lose a diamond
Wherein he has compressed his total wealth,
Or the right hand whose cunning makes him
great:

I lost you by a trivial accident.
Marauding Spaniards, sweeping like a storm
Over a spot within the Moorish bounds,
Near where our camp lay, doubtless snatched you up,
When Zind, your nurse, as she confessed, was
urged

By burning thirst to wander towards the stream,
And leave you on the sand some paces off
Playing with pebbles, while she dog-like lapped.
'T was so I lost you, — never saw you more
Until to-day I saw you dancing! Saw
The child of the Zincalo making sport
For those who spit upon her people's name.

FEDALMA (*vehemently*).

It was not sport. What if the world looked on? —
I danced for joy, — for love of all the world.

But when you looked at me my joy was stabbed, —
Stabbed with your pain. I wondered . . . now I
know . . .

It was my father's pain.

(She pauses a moment with eyes bent downward, during which ZARCA examines her face. Then she says quickly,)

How were you sure

At once I was your child?

ZARCA.

Oh, I had witness strong
As any Cadi needs, before I saw you!
I fitted all my memories with the chat
Of one named Juan, — one whose rapid talk
Showers like the blossoms from a light-twigg'd
shrub,

If you but coughed beside it. I learned all
The story of your Spanish nurture, — all
The promise of your fortune. When at last
I fronted you, my little maid full-grown,
Belief was turned to vision: then I saw
That she whom Spaniards called the bright Fe-
dalma, —

The little red-frocked foundling three years old, —
Grown to such perfectness the Christian Duke
Had wooed her for his Duchess, — was the child,
Sole offspring of my flesh, that Lambra bore
One hour before the Christian, hunting us,
Hurried her on to death. Therefore I sought you,
Therefore I come to claim you — claim my child,

Not from the Spaniard, not from him who robbed,
But from herself.

(FEDALMA *has gradually approached close to ZARCA, and with a low sob sinks on her knees before him. He stoops to kiss her brow, and lays his hands on her head.*)

ZARCA (*with solemn tenderness*).

Then my child owns her father ?

FEDALMA.

Father ! yes.

I will eat dust before I will deny
The flesh I spring from.

ZARCA.

There my daughter spoke.
Away then with these rubies !

(*He seizes the circlet of rubies and flings it on the ground. FEDALMA, starting from the ground with strong emotion, shrinks backward.*)

Such a crown

Is infamy on a Zincala's brow.
It is her people's blood, decking her shame.

FEDALMA (*after a moment, slowly and distinctly, as if accepting a doom*).

Then . . . I am . . . a Zincala ?

ZARCA.

Of a blood

Unmixed as virgin wine-juice.

FEDALMA.

Of a race

More outeast and despised than Moor or Jew ?

ZARCA.

Yes : wanderers whom no god took knowledge of
 To give them laws, to fight for them, or blight
 Another race to make them ampler room ;
 A people with no home even in memory,
 No dimmest lore of giant ancestors
 To make a common hearth for piety.

FEDALMA.

A race that lives on prey as foxes do
 With stealthy, petty rapine : so despised,
 It is not persecuted, only spurned,
 Crushed underfoot, warred on by chance like rats,
 Or swarming flies, or reptiles of the sea
 Dragged in the net unsought, and flung far off
 To perish as they may ?

ZARCA.

You paint us well.

So abject are the men whose blood we share ;
 Untutored, unbefriended, unendowed ;
 No favourites of heaven or of men.
 Therefore I cling to them ! Therefore no lure
 Shall draw me to disown them, or forsake
 The meagre wandering herd that lows for help
 And needs me for its guide, to seek my pasture
 Among the well-fed beeves that graze at will.
 Because our race have no great memories,
 I will so live they shall remember me
 For deeds of such divine beneficence

As rivers have, that teach men what is good
By blessing them. I have been schooled,— have
caught

Lore from the Hebrew, deftness from the Moor,—
Know the rich heritage, the milder life,
Of nations fathered by a mighty Past ;
But were our race accursed (as they who make
Good luck a god count all unlucky men)
I would espouse their curse sooner than take
My gifts from brethren naked of all good,
And lend them to the rich for usury.

(FEDALMA *again advances, and putting forth
her right hand grasps ZARCA'S left. He
places his other hand on her shoulder.
They stand so, looking at each other.*)

ZARCA.

And you, my child? are you of other mind,
Choosing forgetfulness, hating the truth
That says you are akin to needy men?—
Wishing your father were some Christian Duke,
Who could hang Gypsies when their task was done,
While you, his daughter, were not bound to care?

FEDALMA (*in a troubled, eager voice*).

No, I should always care — I cared for you —
For all, before I dreamed . . .

ZARCA.

Before you dreamed
You were a born Zincala, — in the bonds
Of the Zincali's faith.

FEDALMA (*bitterly*).

Zincali's faith?

Men say they have none.

ZARCA.

Oh, it is a faith
 Taught by no priest, but by their beating hearts.
 Faith to each other: the fidelity
 Of fellow-wanderers in a desert place
 Who share the same dire thirst, and therefore
 share
 The scanty water: the fidelity
 Of men whose pulses leap with kindred fire,
 Who in the flash of eyes, the clasp of hands,
 The speech that even in lying tells the truth
 Of heritage inevitable as past deeds,
 Nay, in the silent bodily presence feel
 The mystic stirring of a common life
 Which makes the many one: fidelity
 To that deep consecrating oath our sponsor Fate
 Made through our infant breath when we were
 born,
 The fellow-heirs of that small island, Life,
 Where we must dig and sow and reap with brothers.
 Fear thou that oath, my daughter,— nay, not
 fear,
 But love it; for the sanctity of oaths
 Lies not in lightning that avenges them,
 But in the injury wrought by broken bonds
 And in the garnered good of human trust.
 And you have sworn,— even with your infant
 breath
 You too were pledged . . .

FEDALMA (*lets go ZARCA'S hand and sinks backward
 on her knees, with bent head, as if before some im-
 pending crushing weight*).

What have I sworn?

ZARCA.

To live the life of the Zinca's child:
 The child of him who, being chief, will be
 The saviour of his tribe, or if he fail
 Will choose to fail rather than basely win
 The prize of renegades. Nay — will not choose —
 Is there a choice for strong souls to be weak?
 For men erect to crawl like hissing snakes?
 I choose not, — I *am* Zarca. Let him choose
 Who halts and wavers, having appetite
 To feed on garbage. You, my child, — are you
 Halting and wavering?

FEDALMA (*raising her head*).

Say what is my task?

ZARCA.

To be the angel of a homeless tribe:
 To help me bless a race taught by no prophet,
 And make their name, now but a badge of scorn,
 A glorious banner floating in their midst,
 Stirring the air they breathe with impulses
 Of generous pride, exalting fellowship
 Until it soars to magnanimity.
 I'll guide my brethren forth to their new land,
 Where they shall plant and sow and reap their
 own,
 Serving each other's needs, and so be spurred
 To skill in all the arts that succour life;
 Where we may kindle our first altar-fire
 From settled hearths, and call our Holy Place
 The hearth that binds us in one family.
 That land awaits them: they await their chief, —
 Me who am prisoned. All depends on you.

FEDALMA (*rising to her full height, and looking solemnly at ZARCA*).

Father, your child is ready! She will not
 Forsake her kindred: she will brave all scorn
 Sooner than scorn herself. Let Spaniards all,
 Christians, Jews, Moors, shoot out the lip and say,
 "Lo, the first hero in a tribe of thieves."
 Is it not written so of them? They, too,
 Were slaves, lost, wandering, sunk beneath a curse,
 Till Moses, Christ, and Mahomet were born,
 Till beings lonely in their greatness lived,
 And lived to save their people. Father, listen.
 To-morrow the Duke weds me secretly:
 But straight he will present me as his wife
 To all his household, cavaliers and dames
 And noble pages. Then I will declare
 Before them all: "I am his daughter, his,
 The Gypsy's, owner of this golden badge."
 Then I shall win your freedom; then the Duke —
 Why, he will be your son! — will send you forth
 With aid and honours. Then, before all eyes
 I'll clasp this badge on you, and lift my brow
 For you to kiss it, saying by that sign,
 "I glory in my father." This, to-morrow.

ZARCA.

A woman's dream, — who thinks by smiling well
 To ripen figs in frost. What! marry first,
 And then proclaim your birth? Enslave yourself
 To use your freedom? Share another's name,
 Then treat it as you will? How will that tune
 Ring in your bridegroom's ears, — that sudden
 song
 Of triumph in your Gypsy father?

FEDALMA (*discouraged*).

Nay,

I meant not so. We marry hastily —
 Yet there is time — there will be: — in less space
 Than he can take to look at me, I'll speak
 And tell him all. Oh, I am not afraid!
 His love for me is stronger than all hate;
 Nay, stronger than my love, which cannot sway
 Demons that haunt me, — tempt me to rebel.
 Were he Fedalma and I Silva, he
 Could love confession, prayers, and tonsured monks
 If my soul craved them. He will never hate
 The race that bore him what he loves the most.
 I shall but do more strongly what I will,
 Having his will to help me. And to-morrow,
 Father, as surely as this heart shall beat,
 You, every chained Zinealo, shall be free.

ZARCA (*coming nearer to her, and laying his hand on her shoulder*).

Too late, too poor a service that, my child!
 Not so the woman who would save her tribe
 Must help its heroes, — not by wordy breath,
 By easy prayers strong in a lover's ear,
 By showering wreaths and sweets and wafted kisses,
 And then, when all the smiling work is done,
 Turning to rest upon her down again,
 And whisper languid pity for her race
 Upon the bosom of her alien spouse.
 Not to such petty mercies as can fall
 'Twixt stitch and stitch of silken broidery work.
 Such miracles of mitred saints who pause
 Beneath their gilded canopy to heal
 A man sun-stricken: not to such trim merit

As soils its dainty shoes for charity
 And simpers meekly at the pious stain,
 But never trod with naked bleeding feet
 Where no man praised it, and where no Church
 blessed :

Not to such almsdeeds fit for holidays
 Were you, my daughter, consecrated, — bound
 By laws that, breaking, you will dip your bread
 In murdered brother's blood and call it sweet, —
 When you were born in the Zincalo's tent,
 And lifted up in sight of all your tribe,
 Who greeted you with shouts of loyal joy,
 Sole offspring of the chief in whom they trust
 As in the oft-tried never-failing flint
 They strike their fire from. Other work is yours.

FEDALMA.

What work ? — what is it that you ask of me ?

ZARCA.

A work as pregnant as the act of men
 Who set their ships aflame and spring to land,
 A fatal deed . . .

FEDALMA.

Stay ! never utter it !
 If it can part my lot from his whose love
 Has chosen me. Talk not of oaths, of birth,
 Of men as numerous as the dim white stars, —
 As cold and distant, too, for my heart's pulse.
 No ills on earth, though you should count them up
 With grains to make a mountain, can outweigh
 For me, his ill who is my supreme love.
 All sorrows else are but imagined flames,

Making me shudder at an unfelt smart.
 But his imagined sorrow is a fire
 That scorches me.

ZARCA.

I know, I know it well,—
 The first young passionate wail of spirits called
 To some great destiny. In vain, my daughter!
 Lay the young eagle in what nest you will,
 The cry and swoop of eagles overhead
 Vibrate prophetic in its kindred frame,
 And make it spread its wings and poise itself
 For the eagle's flight. Hear what you have to do.

(FEDALMA *breaks from him and stands half
 .averted, as if she dreaded the effect of his
 looks and words.*)

My comrades even now file off their chains
 In a low turret by the battlements,
 Where we were locked with slight and sleepy
 -guard,—
 We who had files hid in our shaggy hair,
 And possible ropes that waited but our will
 In half our garments. Oh, the Moorish blood
 Runs thick and warm to us, though thinned by
 chrisin.

I found a friend among our jailers, — one
 Who loves the Gypsy as the Moor's ally.
 I know the secrets of this fortress. Listen.
 Hard by yon terrace is a narrow stair,
 Cut in the living rock, and at one point
 In its slow straggling course it branches off
 Towards a low wooden door, that art has bossed
 To such unevenness, it seems one piece
 With the rough-hewn rock. Opened, it leads
 Through a broad passage burrowed underground

A good half-mile out to the open plain :
 Made for escape, in dire extremity
 From siege or burning, of the house's wealth
 In women or in gold. To find that door
 Needs one who knows the number of the steps
 Just to the turning-point ; to open it,
 Needs one who knows the secret of the bolt.
 You have that secret : you will ope that door,
 And fly with us.

FEDALMA (*receding a little, and gathering herself up
 in an attitude of resolve opposite to Zarea*).

No, I will never fly !

Never forsake that chief half of my soul
 Where lies my love. I swear to set you free.
 Ask for no more ; it is not possible.
 Father, my soul is not too base to ring
 At touch of your great thoughts ; nay, in my blood
 There streams the sense unspeakable of kind,
 As leopard feels at ease with leopard. But,—
 Look at these hands ! You say when they were
 little

They played about the gold upon your neck.
 I do believe it, for their tiny pulse
 Made record of it in the inmost coil
 Of growing memory. But see them now !
 Oh they have made fresh record ; twined themselves
 With other throbbing hands whose pulses feed
 Not memories only but a blended life, —
 Life that will bleed to death if it be severed.
 Have pity on me, father ! Wait the morning ;
 Say you will wait the morning. I will win
 Your freedom openly : you shall go forth
 With aid and honours. Silva will deny
 Naught to my asking . . .

ZARCA (*with contemptuous decision*).

Till you ask him aught

Wherein he is powerless. Soldiers even now
Murmur against him that he risks the town,
And forfeits all the prizes of a foray
To get his bridal pleasure with a bride
Too low for him. They'll murmur more and louder
If captives of our pith and sinew, fit
For all the work the Spaniard hates, are freed,—
Now, too, when Spanish hands are scanty. What,
Turn Gypsies loose instead of hanging them!
'T is flat against the edict. Nay, perchance
Murmurs aloud may turn to silent threats
Of some well-sharpened dagger; for your Duke
Has to his heir a pious cousin, who deems
The Cross were better served if he were Duke.
Such good you'll work your lover by your prayers.

FEDALMA.

Then, I will free you now! You shall be safe,
Nor he be blamed, save for his love to me.
I will declare what I have done: the deed
May put our marriage off. . . .

ZARCA.

Ay, till the time

When you shall be a queen in Africa,
And he be prince enough to sue for you.
You cannot free us and come back to him.

FEDALMA.

And why?

ZARCA.

I would compel you to go forth.

FEDALMA.

You tell me that ?

ZARCA.

Yes, for I 'd have you choose ;
Though, being of the blood you are, — my blood, —
You have no right to choose.

FEDALMA.

I only owe
A daughter's debt ; I was not born a slave.

ZARCA.

No, not a slave ; but you were born to reign.
'T is a compulsion of a higher sort,
Whose fetters are the net invisible
That holds all life together. Royal deeds
May make long destinies for multitudes,
And you are called to do them. You belong
Not to the petty round of circumstance
That makes a woman's lot, but to your tribe,
Who trust in me and in my blood with trust
That men call blind ; but it is only blind
As unyeaned reason is, that growing stirs
Within the womb of superstition.

FEDALMA.

No !

I belong to him who loves me — whom I love —
Who chose me — whom I chose — to whom I
pledged
A woman's truth. And that is nature too,
Issuing a fresher law than laws of birth.

ZARCA.

Well, then, unmake yourself from a Zincala,—
 Unmake yourself from being child of mine!
 Take holy water, cross your dark skin white;
 Round your proud eyes to foolish kitten looks;
 Walk mincingly, and smirk, and twitch your robe:
 Unmake yourself, — doff all the eagle plumes
 And be a parrot, chained to a ring that slips
 Upon a Spaniard's thumb, at will of his
 That you should prattle o'er his words again!
 Get a small heart that flutters at the smiles
 Of that plump penitent and greedy saint
 Who breaks all treaties in the name of God,
 Saves souls by confiscation, sends to heaven
 The altar-fumes of burning heretics,
 And chaffers with the Levite for the gold;
 Holds Gypsies beasts unfit for sacrifice,
 So sweeps them out like worms alive or dead.
 Go, trail your gold and velvet in her presence! —
 Conscious Zincala, smile at your rare luck,
 While half your brethren . . .

FEDALMA.

I am not so vile!

It is not to such mockeries that I cling,
 Not to the flaring tow of gala-lights:
 It is to him — my love — the face of day.

ZARCA.

What, will you part him from the air he breathes,
 Never inhale with him although you kiss him?
 Will you adopt a soul without its thoughts,
 Or grasp a life apart from flesh and blood?
 Till then you cannot wed a Spanish Duke

And not wed shame at mention of your race,
 And not wed hardness to their miseries,—
 Nay, not wed murder. Would you save my life
 Yet stab my purpose? maim my every limb,
 Put out my eyes, and turn me loose to feed?
 Is that salvation? rather drink my blood.
 That child of mine who weds my enemy,—
 Adores a God who took no heed of Gypsies,—
 Forsakes her people, leaves their poverty
 To join the luckier crowd that mocks their
 woes,—

That child of mine is doubly murderess,
 Murdering her father's hope, her people's trust.
 Such draughts are mingled in your cup of love.
 And when you have become a thing so poor,
 Your life is all a fashion without law
 Save frail conjecture of a changing wish,
 Your worshipped sun, your smiling face of day,
 Will turn to cloudiness, and you will shiver
 In your thin finery of vain desire.
 Men call his passion madness; and he, too,
 May learn to think it madness: 't is a thought
 Of dual sanity.

FEDALMA.

No, he is true!

And if I part from him I part from joy.
 Oh, it was morning with us,—I seemed young.
 But now I know I am an aged sorrow,—
 My people's sorrow. Father, since I am yours,—
 Since I must walk an unslain sacrifice,
 Carrying the knife within me, quivering,—
 Put cords upon me, drag me to the doom
 My birth has laid upon me. See, I kneel:
 I cannot will to go.

ZARCA.

Will then to stay!

Say you will take your better, painted such
 By blind desire, and choose the hideous worse
 For thousands who were happier but for you.
 My thirty followers are assembled now
 Without this terrace: I your father wait
 That you may lead us forth to liberty,—
 Restore me to my tribe,— five hundred men
 Whom I alone can save, alone can rule,
 And plant them as a mighty nation's seed.
 Why, vagabonds who clustered round one man,
 Their voice of God, their prophet, and their
 king,

Twice grew to empire on the teeming shores
 Of Africa, and sent new royalties
 To feed afresh the Arab sway in Spain.
 My vagabonds are a seed more generous,
 Quick as the serpent, loving as the hound,
 And beautiful as disinherited gods.
 They have a promised land beyond the sea:
 There I may lead them, raise my standard, call
 All wandering Zincali to that home,
 And make a nation,— bring light, order, law,
 Instead of chaos. You, my only heir,
 Are called to reign for me when I am gone.
 Now choose your deed: to save or to destroy.
 You, woman and Zincala, fortunate
 Above your fellows,— you who hold a curse
 Or blessing in the hollow of your hand,—
 Say you will loose that hand from fellowship,
 Let go the rescuing rope, hurl all the tribes.
 Children and countless beings yet to come,
 Down from the upward path of light and joy,

Back to the dark and marshy wilderness
 Where life is naught but blind tenacity
 Of that which is. Say you will curse your race!

FEDALMA (*rising and stretching out her arms in deprecation*).

No, no,— I will not say it,— I will go!
 Father, I choose! I will not take a heaven
 Haunted by shrieks of far-off misery.
 This deed and I have ripened with the hours:
 It is a part of me,— awakened thought
 That, rising like a giant, masters me,
 And grows into a doom. O mother life,
 That seemed to nourish me so tenderly,
 Even in the womb you vowed me to the fire,
 Hung on my soul the burden of men's hopes,
 And pledged me to redeem! — I'll pay the debt.
 You gave me strength that I should pour it all
 Into this anguish. I can never shrink
 Back into bliss,— my heart has grown too big
 With things that might be. Father, I will go.
 I will strip off these gems. Some happier bride
 Shall wear them, since Fedalma would be dowered
 With naught but curses, dowered with misery
 Of men,— of women, who have hearts to bleed
 As hers is bleeding.

(*She sinks on a seat, and begins to take off her jewels.*)

Now, good gems, we part.
 Speak of me always tenderly to Silva.

(*She pauses, turning to ZARCA.*)

O father, will the women of our tribe
 Suffer as I do, in the years to come
 When you have made them great in Africa?

Redeemed from ignorant ills only to feel
 A conscious woe? Then,— is it worth the pains?
 Were it not better when we reach that shore
 To raise a funeral-pile and perish all?
 So closing up a myriad avenues
 To misery yet unwrought? My soul is faint,—
 Will these sharp pangs buy any certain good?

ZARCA.

Nay, never falter: no great deed is done
 By falterers who ask for certainty.
 No good is certain, but the steadfast mind,
 The undivided will to seek the good:
 'T is that compels the elements, and wrings
 A human music from the indifferent air.
 The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
 Is to have been a hero. Say we fail! —
 We feed the high tradition of the world,
 And leave our spirit in Zincolo breasts.

FEDALMA (*unclasping her jewelled belt, and throwing
 it down*).

Yes, say that we shall fail! I will not count
 On aught but being faithful. I will take
 This yearning self of mine and strangle it.
 I will not be half-hearted: never yet
 Fedalma did aught with a wavering soul.
 Die, my young joy,— die, all my hungry hopes,—
 The milk you cry for from the breast of life
 Is thick with curses. Oh, all fatness here
 Snatches its meat from leanness,— feeds on graves.
 I will seek nothing but to shun what 's base.
 The saints were cowards who stood by to see
 Christ crucified: they should have flung themselves
 Upon the Roman spears, and died in vain,—

The grandest death, to die in vain,— for love
 Greater than sways the forces of the world.
 That death shall be my bridegroom. I will wed
 The curse of the Zincali. Father, come!

ZARCA.

No curse has fallen on us till we cease
 To help each other. You, if you are false
 To that first fellowship, lay on the curse.
 But write now to the Spaniard: briefly say
 That I, your father, came; that you obeyed
 The fate which made you a Zincala, as his fate
 Made him a Spanish duke and Christian knight.
 He must not think . . .

FEDALMA.

Yes, I will write, but he,
 Oh, he would know it,— he would never think
 The chain that dragged me from him could be
 aught
 But scorching iron entering in my soul.

(*She writes.*)

*Silva, sole love, — he came, — my father came.
 I am the daughter of the Gypsy chief
 Who means to be the Saviour of our tribe.
 He calls on me to live for his great end.
 To live? nay, die for it. Fedalma dies
 In leaving Silva: all that lives henceforth
 Is the Zincala.*

(*She rises.*)

Father, now I go
 To wed my people's lot.

ZAPCA.

To wed a crown.
 We will make royal the Zincali's lot,—

Give it a country, homes, and monuments
Held sacred through the lofty memories
That we shall leave behind us. Come, my Queen!

FEDALMA.

Stay, my betrothal ring! — one kiss, — farewell!
O love, you were my crown. No other crown
Is aught but thorns on my poor woman's brow.

(Exeunt.)

BOOK II.

SILVA was marching homeward while the moon
Still shed mild brightness like the far-off hope
Of those pale virgin lives that wait and pray.
The stars thin-scattered made the heavens large,
Bending in slow procession; in the east
Emergent from the dark waves of the hills,
Seeming a little sister of the moon,
Glowed Venus all unquenched. Silva, in haste,
Exultant and yet anxious, urged his troop
To quick and quicker march: he had delight
In forward stretching shadows, in the gleams
That travelled on the armour of the van,
And in the many-hoofed sound: in all that told
Of hurrying movement to o’ertake his thought
Already in Bedmár, close to Fedalma,
Leading her forth a wedded bride, fast vowed,
Defying Father Isidor. His glance
Took in with much content the priest who rode
Firm in his saddle, stalwart and broad-backed,
Crisp-curled, and comfortably secular,
Right in the front of him. But by degrees
Stealthily faint, disturbing with slow loss
That showed not yet full promise of a gain,
The light was changing and the watch intense
Of moon and stars seemed weary, shivering:
The sharp white brightness passed from off the rocks
Carrying the shadows: beauteous Night lay dead
Under the pall of twilight, and the love-star
Sickened and shrank. The troop was winding now

Upward to where a pass between the peaks
 Seemed like an opened gate, — to Silva seemed
 An outer-gate of heaven, for through that pass
 They entered his own valley, near Bedmár.
 Sudden within the pass a horseman rose
 One instant dark upon the banner pale
 Of rock-cut sky, the next in motion swift
 With hat and plume high shaken, — ominous.
 Silva had dreamed his future, and the dream
 Held not this messenger. A minute more, —
 It was his friend Don Alvar whom he saw
 Reining his horse up, face to face with him,
 Sad as the twilight, all his clothes ill-girt, —
 As if he had been roused to see one die,
 And brought the news to him whom death had
 robbed.

Silva believed he saw the worst, — the town
 Stormed by the infidel, — or, could it be
 Fedalma dragged? — no, there was not yet time.
 But with a marble face, he only said,
 “What evil, Alvar?”

“What this paper speaks.”

It was Fedalma’s letter folded close
 And mute as yet for Silva. But his friend
 Keeping it still sharp-pinched against his breast,
 “It will smite hard, my lord: a private grief.
 I would not have you pause to read it here.
 Let us ride on, — we use the moments best,
 Reaching the town with speed. The smaller ill
 Is that our Gypsy prisoners have escaped.”
 “No more. Give me the paper, — nay, I know, —
 ’T will make no difference. Bid them march on
 faster.”

Silva pushed forward, — held the paper crushed
 Close in his right. “They have imprisoned her,

He said to Alvar in low, hard-cut tones,
 Like a dream-speech of slumbering revenge.
 "No, — when they came to fetch her, she was gone."
 Swift as the right touch on a spring, that word
 Made Silva read the letter. She was gone!
 But not into locked darkness, — only gone
 Into free air, — where he might find her yet.
 The bitter loss had triumph in it, — what!
 They would have seized her with their holy claws?
 The Prior's sweet morsel of despotic hate
 Was snatched from off his lips. This misery
 Had yet a taste of joy.

But she was gone!

The sun had risen, and in the castle walls
 The light grew strong and stronger. Silva walked
 Through the long corridor where dimness yet
 Cherished a lingering, flickering, dying hope:
 Fedalma still was there, — he could not see
 The vacant place that once her presence filled.
 Can we believe that the dear dead are gone?
 Love in sad weeds forgets the funeral day,
 Opens the chamber door and almost smiles, —
 Then sees the sunbeams pierce athwart the bed
 Where the pale face is not. So Silva's joy,
 Like the sweet habit of caressing hands
 That seek the memory of another hand,
 Still lived on fitfully in spite of words,
 And, numbing thought with vague illusion, dulled
 The slow and steadfast beat of certainty.
 But in the rooms inexorable light
 Streamed through the open window where she fled,
 Streamed on the belt and coronet thrown down, —
 Mute witnesses, — sought out the typic ring
 That sparkled on the crimson, solitary,
 Wounding him like a word. O hateful light!

It filled the chambers with her absence, glared
On all the motionless things her hand had touched,
Motionless all,— save where old Iñez lay
Sunk on the floor holding her rosary,
Making its shadow tremble with her fear.
And Silva passed her by because she grieved :
It was the lute, the gems, the pictured heads,
He longed to crush, because they made no sign
But of insistence that she was not there,
She who had filled his sight and hidden them.
He went forth on the terrace tow'rd the stairs,
Saw the rained petals of the cistus flowers
Crushed by large feet ; but on one shady spot
Far down the steps, where dampness made a home,
He saw a footprint delicate-slippered, small,
So dear to him, he searched for sister-prints,
Searched in the rock-hewn passage with a lamp
For other trace of her, and found a glove ;
But not Fedalma's. It was Juan's glove,
Tasselled, perfumed, embroidered with his name,
A gift of dames. Then Juan, too, was gone ?
Full-mouthed conjecture, hurrying through the
town,
Had spread the tale already, — it was he
That helped the Gypsies' flight. He talked and
sang
Of nothing but the Gypsies and Fedalma.
He drew the threads together, wove the plan.
Had lingered out by moonlight and been seen
Strolling, as was his wont, within the walls,
Humming his ditties. So Don Alvar told,
Conveying outside rumour. But the Duke
Keeping his haughtiness as a visor closed
Would show no agitated front in quest
Of small disclosures. What her writing bore

Had been enough. He knew that she was gone,
Knew why.

“The Duke,” some said, “will send a force,
Retake the prisoners, and bring back his bride.”
But others, winking, “Nay, her wedding dress
Would be the *san-benito*. ’T is a fight
Between the Duke and Prior. Wise bets will choose
The churchman: he’s the iron, and the Duke” —
“Is a fine piece of pottery,” said mine host,
Softening the epigram with a bland regret.

There was the thread that in the new-made knot
Of obstinate circumstance seemed hardest drawn,
Vexed most the sense of Silva, in these hours
Of fresh and angry pain,—there, in that fight
Against a foe whose sword was magical,
His shield invisible terrors,—against a foe
Who stood as if upon the smoking mount
Ordaining plagues. All else, Fedalma’s flight,
The father’s claim, her Gypsy birth disclosed,
Were momentary crosses, hindrances
A Spanish noble might despise. This Chief
Might still be treated with, would not refuse
A proffered ransom, which would better serve
Gypsy prosperity, give him more power
Over his tribe, than any fatherhood:
Nay, all the father in him must plead loud
For marriage of his daughter where she loved,—
Her love being placed so high and lustrously.
The keen Zincalo had foreseen a price
That would be paid him for his daughter’s dower,—
Might soon give signs. Oh, all his purpose lay
Face upward. Silva here felt strong, and smiled.
What could a Spanish noble not command?
He only helped the Queen, because he chose,—

Could war on Spaniards, and could spare the Moor, —
 Buy justice, or defeat it, — if he would :
 Was loyal, not from weakness but from strength
 Of high resolve to use his birthright well.
 For nobles too are gods, like Emperors,
 Accept perforce their own divinity
 And wonder at the virtue of their touch,
 Till obstinate resistance shakes their creed,
 Shattering that self whose wholeness is not rounded
 Save in the plastic souls of other men.
 Don Silva had been suckled in that creed
 (A speculative noble else, knowing Italian),
 Held it absurd as foolish argument
 If any failed in deference, was too proud
 Not to be courteous to so poor a knave
 As one who knew not necessary truths
 Of birth and precedence ; but cross his will,
 The miracle-working will, his rage leaped out
 As by a right divine to rage more fatal
 Than a mere mortal man's. And now that will
 Had met a stronger adversary, — strong
 As awful ghosts are whom we cannot touch,
 While they grasp *us*, subtly as poisoned air,
 In deep-laid fibres of inherited fear
 That lie below all courage.

Silva said,

“ She is not lost to me, might still be mine
 But for the Inquisition, — the dire hand
 That waits to clutch her with a hideous grasp,
 Not passionate, human, living, but a grasp
 As in the death-throe when the human soul
 Departs and leaves force unrelenting, locked,
 Not to be loosened save by slow decay
 That frets the universe. Father Isidor
 Has willed it so : his phial dropped the oil

To catch the air-borne motes of idle slander;
 He fed the fascinated gaze that clung
 Round all her movements, frank as growths
 With the new hateful interest of suspicion.
 What barrier is this Gypsy? a mere gate
 I'll find the key for. The one barrier,
 The tightening cord that winds about my limbs,
 Is this kind uncle, this imperious saint,
 He who will save me, guard me from myself.
 And he can work his will: I have no help
 Save reptile secrecy, and no revenge
 Save that I *will* do what he schemes to hinder.
 Ay, secrecy, and disobedience, — these
 No tyranny can master. Disobey!
 You may divide the universe with God,
 Keeping your will unbent, and hold a world
 Where he is not supreme. The Prior shall know it!
 His will shall breed resistance: he shall do
 The thing he would not, further what he hates
 By hardening my resolve."

But 'neath this inward speech, —
 Predominant, hectoring, the more passionate voice
 Of many-blended consciousness, — there breathed
 Murmurs of doubt, the weakness of a self
 That is not one; denies and yet believes;
 Protests with passion, "This is natural," —
 Yet owns the other still were truer, better,
 Could nature follow it. A self disturbed
 By budding growths of reason premature
 That breed disease. Spite of defiant rage
 Silva half shrank before the steadfast man
 Whose life was one compacted whole, a state
 Where the rule changed not, and the law was strong.
 Then straightway he resented that forced tribute,
 Rousing rebellion with intenser will.

But soon this inward strife the slow-paced hours
Slackened; and the soul sank with hunger-pangs,
Hunger of love. Debate was swept right down
By certainty of loss intolerable.
A little loss! only a dark-tressed maid
Who had no heritage save her beauteous being!
But in the candour of her virgin eyes
Saying, I love; and in the mystic charm
Of her dear presence, Silva found a heaven
Where faith and hope were drowned as stars in day.
Fedalma there, each momentary Now
Seemed a whole blest existence, a full cup
That, flowing over, asked no pouring hand
From past to future. All the world was hers.
Splendour was but the herald trumpet note
Of her imperial coming: penury
Vanished before her as before a gem
The pledge of treasures. Fedalma there,
He thought all loveliness was lovelier,
She crowning it: all goodness credible,
Because of the great trust her goodness bred.
For the strong current of that passionate love
Which urged his life tow'rds hers, like urgent floods
That hurry through the various-mingled earth,
Carried within its stream all qualities
Of what it penetrated, and made love
Only another name, as Silva was,
For the whole man that breathed within his frame.
And she was gone. Well, goddesses will go;
But for a noble there were mortals left
Shaped just like goddesses, — O hateful sweet!
O impudent pleasure that should dare to front
With vulgar visage memories divine!
The noble's birthright of miraculous will
Turning *I would to must be*, spurning all

Offered as substitute for what it chose,
 Tightened and fixed in strain irrevocable
 The passionate selection of that love
 Which came not first but as all-conquering last.
 Great Love has many attributes, and shrines
 For varied worshippers, but his force divine
 Shows most its many-named fulness in the man
 Whose nature multitudinously mixed,
 Each ardent impulse grappling with a thought
 Resists all easy gladness, all content
 Save mystic rapture, where the questioning soul
 Flooded with consciousness of good that is
 Finds life one bounteous answer. So it was
 In Silva's nature, Love had mastery there,
 Not as a holiday ruler, but as one
 Who quells a tumult in a day of dread,
 A welcomed despot.

Oh, all comforters,
 All soothing things that bring mild ecstasy,
 Came with her coming, in her presence lived.
 Spring afternoons, when delicate shadows fall
 Pencilled upon the grass; high summer morns
 When white light rains upon the quiet sea
 And corn-fields flush with ripeness; odours soft, —
 Dumb vagrant bliss that seems to seek a home
 And find it deep within 'mid stirrings vague
 Of far-off moments when our life was fresh;
 All sweetly-tempered music, gentle change
 Of sound, form, colour, as on wide lagoons
 At sunset when from black far-floating prows
 Comes a clear wafted song; all exquisite joy
 Of a subdued desire, like some strong stream
 Made placid in the fulness of a lake, —
 All came with her sweet presence, for she brought
 The love supreme which gathers to its realm

All powers of loving. Subtle nature's hand
 Waked with a touch the intricate harmonies
 In her own manifold work. Fedalma there,
 Fastidiousness became the prelude fine
 For full-contentment, and young melancholy,
 Lost for its origin, seemed but the pain
 Of waiting for that perfect happiness —
 The happiness was gone !

He sat alone,
 Hating companionship that was not hers ;
 Felt bruised with hopeless longing ; drank, as
 wine,
 Illusions of what had been, would have been ;
 Weary with anger and a strained resolve,
 Sought passive happiness in a waking dream.
 It has been so with rulers, emperors,
 Nay, sages who held secrets of great Time,
 Sharing his hoary and beneficent life, —
 Men who sat throned among the multitudes, —
 They have sore sickened at the loss of one.
 Silva sat lonely in her chamber, leaned
 Where she had leaned, to feel the evening breath
 Shed from the orange-trees ; when suddenly
 His grief was echoed in a sad young voice
 Far and yet near, brought by aerial wings.

*The world is great : the birds all fly from me,
 The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
 All out of reach : my little sister went,
 And I am lonely.*

*The world is great : I tried to mount the hill
 Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
 But it rose higher : little Lisa went,
 And I am lonely.*

*The world is great : the wind comes rushing by,
I wonder where it comes from ; sea-bird's cry
And hurt my heart : my little sister went,
And I am lonely.*

*The world is great : the people laugh and talk,
And make loud holiday : how fast they walk !
I'm lame, they push me : little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.*

'T was Pablo, like the wounded spirit of song
Pouring melodious pain to cheat the hour
For idle soldiers in the castle court.
Dreamily Silva heard and hardly felt
The song was outward, rather felt it part
Of his own aching, like the lingering day,
Or slow and mournful cadence of the bell.
But when the voice had ceased, he longed for it,
And fretted at the pause, as memory frets
When words that made its body fall away
And leave it yearning dumbly. Silva then
Bethought him whence the voice came, framed per-
force

Some outward image of a life not his
That made a sorrowful centre to the world, —
A boy lame, melancholy-eyed, who bore
A viol, — yes, that very child he saw
This morning eating roots by the gateway, —
saw

As one fresh-ruined sees and spells a name
And knows not what he does, yet finds it writ
Full in the inner record. Hark, again !
The voice and viol. Silva called his thought
To guide his ear and track the travelling sound.

*O bird that used to press
 Thy head against my cheek
 With touch that seemed to speak
 And ask a tender "yes," —
 Ay de mi, my bird!*

*O tender downy breast
 And warmly beating heart,
 That beating seemed a part
 Of me who gave it rest, —
 Ay de mi, my bird!*

The western court! The singer might be seen
 From the upper gallery: quick the Duke was there
 Looking upon the court as on a stage.
 Men eased of armour, stretched upon the ground,
 Gambling by snatches; shepherds from the hills
 Who brought their bleating friends for slaughter;
 grooms
 Shouldering loose harness; leather-aproned smiths,
 Traders with wares, green-suited serving-men,
 Made a round audience; and in their midst
 Stood little Pablo, pouring forth his song,
 Just as the Duke had pictured — But the song
 Was strangely companied by Roldan's play
 With the swift-gleaming balls, and now was crushed
 By peals of laughter at grave Annibal,
 Who carrying stick and purse o'erturned the pence,
 Making mistake by rule. Silva had thought
 To melt hard bitter grief by fellowship
 With the world-sorrow trembling in his ear
 In Pablo's voice; had meant to give command
 For the boy's presence; but this company,
 This mountebank and monkey, must be — stay!
 Not be excepted — must be ordered too

Into his private presence; they had brought
 Suggestion of a ready shapen tool
 To cut a path between his helpless wish
 And what it imaged. A ready shapen tool!
 A spy, an envoy whom he might despatch
 In unsuspected secrecy, to find
 The Gypsies' refuge so that none beside
 Might learn it. And this juggler could be bribed,
 Would have no fear of Moors, — for who would kill
 Dancers and monkeys? — could pretend a journey
 Back to his home, leaving his boy the while
 To please the Duke with song. Without such
 chance, —

An envoy cheap and secret as a mole
 Who could go scathless, come back for his pay
 And vanish straight, tied by no neighbourhood, —
 Without such chance as this poor juggler brought,
 Finding Fedalma was betraying her.

Short interval betwixt the thought and deed.
 Roldan was called to private audience
 With Annibal and Pablo. All the world
 (By which I mean the score or two who heard)
 Shrugged high their shoulders, and supposed the
 Duke

Would fain beguile the evening and replace
 His lacking happiness, as was the right
 Of nobles, who could pay for any cure,
 And wore naught broken, save a broken limb.
 In truth, at first, the Duke bade Pablo sing,
 But, while he sang, called Roldan wide apart,
 And told him of a mission secret, brief, —
 A quest which well performed might earn much
 gold,
 But, if betrayed, another sort of wages.

Roldan was ready; "wished above all for gold
 And never wished to speak; had worked enough
 At wagging his old tongue and chiming jokes;
 Thought it was others' turn to play the fool.
 Give him but peuce enough, no rabbit, sirs,
 Would eat and stare and be more dumb than he.
 Give him his orders."

They were given straight;
 Gold for the journey, and to buy a mule
 Outside the gates through which he was to pass
 Afoot and carelessly. The boy would stay
 Within the castle, at the Duke's command,
 And must have naught but ignorance to betray
 For threats or coaxing. Once the quest performed,
 The news delivered with some pledge of truth
 Safe to the Duke, the juggler should go forth,
 A fortune in his girdle, take his boy
 And settle firm as any planted tree
 In fair Valencia, never more to roam.
 "Good! good! most worthy of a great hidalgo!
 And Roldan was the man! But Annibal, —
 A monkey like no other, though a morose
 In private character, yet full of tricks, —
 'T were hard to carry him, yet harder still
 To leave the boy and him in company
 And free to slip away. The boy was wild
 And shy as mountain kid; once hid himself
 And tried to run away; and Annibal,
 Who always took the lad's side (he was small,
 And they were nearer of a size, and, sirs,
 Your monkey has a spite against us men
 For being bigger), — Annibal went too.
 Would hardly know himself, were he to lose
 Both boy and monkey, — and 't was property,
 The trouble he had put in Annibal.

He did n't choose another man should beat
 His boy and monkey. If they ran away
 Some man would snap them up, and square himself
 And say they were his goods, — he'd taught them,
 — no!

He Roldan had no mind another man
 Should fatten by his monkey, and the boy
 Should not be kicked by any pair of sticks
 Calling himself a juggler." . . .

But the Duke,
 Tired of that hammering, signed that it should cease;
 Bade Roldan quit all fears, — the boy and ape
 Should be safe lodged in Abderahman's tower,
 In keeping of the great physician there,
 The Duke's most special confidant and friend,
 One skilled in taming brutes, and always kind.
 The Duke himself this eve would see them lodged.
 Roldan must go, — spend no more words, — but go.

A room high up in Abderahman's tower,
 A window open to the still warm eve,
 And the bright disk of royal Jupiter.
 Lamps burning low make little atmospheres
 Of light amid the dimness; here and there
 Show books and phials, stones and instruments.
 In carved dark-oaken chair, unpillowed, sleeps
 Right in the rays of Jupiter a small man,
 In skull-cap bordered close with crisp gray curls,
 And loose black gown showing a neck and breast
 Protected by a dim-green amulet;
 Pale-faced, with finest nostril wont to breathe
 Ethereal passion in a world of thought;
 Eyebrows jet-black and firm, yet delicate;
 Beard scant and grizzled; mouth shut firm, with
 curves

So subtly turned to meanings exquisite,
 You seem to read them as you read a word
 Full-vowelled, long-descended, pregnant,— rich
 With legacies from long, laborious lives.
 Close by him, like a genius of sleep,
 Purrs the gray cat, bridling, with snowy breast.
 A loud knock. “Forward!” in clear vocal ring.
 Enter the Duke, Pablo, and Annibal.
 Exit the cat, retreating toward the dark.

DON SILVA.

You slept, Sephardo. I am come too soon.

SEPHARDO.

Nay, my lord, it was I who slept too long.
 I go to court among the stars to-night,
 So bathed my soul beforehand in deep sleep.
 But who are these?

DON SILVA.

Small guests, for whom I ask
 Your hospitality. Their owner comes
 Some short time hence to claim them. I am pledged
 To keep them safely; so I bring them you,
 Trusting your friendship for small animals.

SEPHARDO.

Yea, am not I too a small animal?

DON SILVA.

I shall be much beholden to your love
 If you will be their guardian. I can trust
 No other man so well as you. The boy
 Will please you with his singing, touches too
 The viol wondrously.

SEPHARDO.

They are welcome both.

Their names are ?

DON SILVA.

Pablo, this — this Annibal,
And yet, I hope, no warrior.

SEPHARDO.

We'll make peace.
Come, Pablo, let us loosen our friend's chain.
Deign you, my lord, to sit. Here, Pablo, thou —
Close to my chair. Now Annibal shall choose.

[The cautious monkey, in a Moorish dress,
A tunic white, turban and scymitar,
Wears these stage garments, nay, his very flesh
With silent protest; keeps a neutral air
As aiming at a metaphysic state
'Twixt "is" and "is not;" lets his chain be loosed
By sage SepharDO's hands, sits still at first,
Then trembles out of his neutrality,
Looks up and leaps into SepharDO's lap,
And chatters forth his agitated soul,
Turning to peep at Pablo on the floor.]

SEPHARDO.

See, he declares we are at amity!

DON SILVA.

No brother sage had read your nature faster.

SEPHARDO.

Why, so he *is* a brother sage. Man thinks
Brutes have no wisdom, since they know not his:

Can we divine their world? — the hidden life
 That mirrors us as hideous shapeless power,
 Cruel supremacy of sharp-edged death,
 Or fate that leaves a bleeding mother robbed?
 Oh, they have long tradition and swift speech,
 Can tell with touches and sharp darting cries
 Whole histories of timid races taught
 To breathe in terror by red-handed man.

DON SILVA.

Ah, you denounce my sport with hawk and
 hound.
 I would not have the angel Gabriel
 As hard as you in noting down my sins.

SEPHARDO.

Nay, they are virtues for you warriors,—
 Hawking and hunting! You are merciful
 When you leave killing men to kill the brutes.
 But, for the point of wisdom, I would choose
 To know the mind that stirs between the wings
 Of bees and building wasps, or fills the woods
 With myriad murmurs of responsive sense
 And true-aimed impulse, rather than to know
 The thoughts of warriors.

DON SILVA.

Yet they are warriors too,—
 Your animals. Your judgment limps, SepharDO:
 Death is the king of this world; 't is his park
 Where he breeds life to feed him. Cries of pain
 Are music for his banquet; and the masque,—
 The last grand masque for his diversion, is
 The Holy Inquisition.

SEPHARDO.

Ay, anon

I may chime in with you. But not the less
My judgment has firm feet. Though death were
king,

And cruelty his right-hand minister,
Pity insurgent in some human breasts
Makes spiritual empire, reigns supreme
As persecuted faith in faithful hearts.
Your small physician, weighing ninety pounds,
A petty morsel for a healthy shark,
Will worship mercy throned within his soul
Though all the luminous angels of the stars
Burst into cruel chorus on his ear,
Singing, "We know no mercy." He would cry
"I know it" still, and soothe the frightened bird
And feed the child a-hungred, walk abreast
Of persecuted men, and keep most hate
For rational torturers. There I stand firm.
But you are bitter, and my speech rolls on
Out of your note.

DON SILVA.

No, no, I follow you.

I too have that within which I will worship
In spite of — yes, SepharDO, I am bitter.
I need your counsel, foresight, all your aid.
Lay these small guests to bed, then we will talk.

SEPHARDO.

See, they are sleeping now. The boy has made
My leg his pillow. For my brother sage,
He 'll never heed us; he knit long ago
A sound ape-system, wherein men are brutes

Emitting doubtful noises. Pray, my lord,
 Unlade what burdens you : my ear and hand
 Are servants of a heart much bound to you.

DON SILVA.

Yes, yours is love that roots in gifts bestowed
 By you on others, and will thrive the more
 The more it gives. I have a double want :
 First a confessor, — not a Catholic ;
 A heart without a livery, — naked manhood.

SEPHARDO.

My lord, I will be frank, there 's no such thing
 As naked manhood. If the stars look down
 On any mortal of our shape, whose strength
 Is to judge all things without preference,
 He is a monster, not a faithful man.
 While my heart beats, it shall wear livery, —
 My people's livery, whose yellow badge
 Marks them for Christian scorn. I will not say
 Man is first man to me, then Jew or Gentile :
 That suits the rich *marranos* ; but to me
 My father is first father and then man.
 So much for frankness' sake. But let that pass.
 'T is true at least, I am no Catholic,
 But Salomo SepharDO, a born Jew,
 Willing to serve Don Silva.

DON SILVA.

Oft you sing
 Another strain, and melt distinctions down,
 As no more real than the wall of dark
 Seen by small fishes' eyes, that pierce a span
 In the wide ocean. Now you league yourself
 To hem me, hold me prisoner in bonds

Made, say you, — how? — by God or Demiurge,
 By spirit or flesh, — I care not! Love was made
 Stronger than bonds, and where they press must
 break them.

I came to you that I might breathe at large,
 And now you stifle me with talk of birth,
 Of race and livery. Yet you knew Fedalma.
 She was your friend, Sephardo. And you know
 She is gone from me, — know the hounds are loosed
 To dog me if I seek her.

SEPHARDO.

Yes. I know.

Forgive me that I used untimely speech,
 Pressing a bruise. I loved her well, my lord:
 A woman mixed of such fine elements
 That were all virtue and religion dead
 She 'd make them newly, being what she was.

DON SILVA.

Was? say not *was*, Sephardo! She still lives, —
 Is, and is mine; and I will not renounce
 What heaven, nay, what she gave me. I will
 sin,

If sin I must, to win my life again.
 The fault lie with those powers who have embroiled
 The world in hopeless conflict, where all truth
 Fights manacled with falsehood, and all good
 Makes but one palpitating life with evil. .

(DON SILVA *pauses*. SEPHARDO *is silent*.)

Sephardo, speak! am I not justified?
 You taught my mind to use the wing that soars
 Above the petty fences of the herd:
 Now, when I need your doctrine, you are dumb.

SEPHARDO.

Patience! Hidalgos want interpreters
 Of untold dreams and riddles; they insist
 On dateless horoscopes, on formulas
 To raise a possible spirit, nowhere named.
 Science must be their wishing cap; the stars
 Speak plainer for high largesse. No, my lord!
 I cannot counsel you to unknown deeds.
 Thus much I can divine: you wish to find
 Her whom you love, — to make a secret search.

DON SILVA.

That is begun already: a messenger
 Unknown to all has been despatched this night.
 But forecast must be used, a plan devised,
 Ready for service when my scout returns,
 Bringing the invisible thread to guide my steps
 Toward that lost self my life is aching with.
 SepharDO, I will go: and I must go
 Unseen by all save you; though, at our need,
 We may trust Alvar.

SEPHARDO.

A grave task, my lord.
 Have you a shapen purpose, or mere will
 That sees the end alone and not the means?
 Resolve will melt no rocks.

DON SILVA.

But it can scale them.
 This fortress has two private issues: one,
 Which served the Gypsies' flight, to me is closed:
 Our bands must watch the outlet, now betrayed
 To cunning enemies. Remains one other,
 Known to no man save me: a secret left

As heirloom in our house: a secret safe
 Even from him, — from Father Isidor.
 'T is he who forces me to use it, — he:
 All's virtue that cheats bloodhounds. Hear
 Sephardo.

Given, my scout returns and brings me news
 I can straight act on, I shall want your aid.
 The issue lies below this tower, your fastness,
 Where, by my charter, you rule absolute.
 I shall feign illness; you with mystic air
 Must speak of treatment asking vigilance
 (Nay, I *am* ill, — my life has half ebb'd out).
 I shall be whimsical, devolve command
 On Don Diego, speak of poisoning,
 Insist on being lodged within this tower,
 And rid myself of tendance save from you
 And perhaps from Alvar. So I shall escape
 Unseen by spies, shall win the days I need
 To ransom her and have her safe enshrined.
 No matter, were my flight disclosed at last:
 I shall come back as from a duel fought
 Which no man can undo. Now you know all.
 Say, can I count on you?

SEPHARDO.

For faithfulness
 In aught that I may promise — yes, my lord.
 But — for a pledge of faithfulness — this warning.
 I will betray naught for your personal harm:
 I love you. But note this, — I am a Jew;
 And while the Christian persecutes my race,
 I'll turn at need even the Christian's trust
 Into a weapon and a shield for Jews.
 Shall Cruelty crowned — wielding the savage force
 Of multitudes, and calling savageness God

Who gives it victory — upbraid deceit
 And ask for faithfulness? I love you well.
 You are my friend. But yet you are a Christian,
 Whose birth has bound you to the Catholic kings.
 There may come moments when to share my joy
 Would make you traitor, when to share your grief
 Would make me other than a Jew . . .

DON SILVA.

What need

To urge that now, Sephardo? I am one
 Of many Spanish nobles who detest
 The roaring bigotry of the herd, would fain
 Dash from the lips of king and queen the cup
 Filled with besotting venom, half infused
 By avarice and half by priests. And now,—
 Now when the cruelty you flout me with
 Pierces me too in the apple of my eye,
 Now when my kinship scorches me like hate
 Flashed from a mother's eye, you choose this time
 To talk of birth as of inherited rage
 Deep-down, volcanic, fatal, bursting forth
 From under hard-taught reason? Wondrous friend-
 ship!

My uncle Isidor's echo, mocking me,
 From the opposing quarter of the heavens,
 With iteration of the thing I know,
 That I 'm a Christian knight and Spanish noble!
 The consequence? Why, that I know. It lies
 In my own hands and not on raven tongues.
 The knight and noble shall not wear the chain
 Of false-linked thoughts in brains of other men.
 What question was there 'twixt us two, of aught
 That makes division? When I come to you
 I come for other doctrine than the Prior's.

SEPHARDO.

My lord, you are o'erwrought by pain. My words,
 That carried innocent meaning, do but float
 Like little emptied cups upon the flood
 Your mind brings with it. I but answered you
 With regular proviso, such as stands
 In testaments and charters, to forefend
 A possible case which none deem likelihood;
 Just turned my sleeve, and pointed to the brand
 Of brotherhood that limits every pledge.
 Superfluous nicety, — the student's trick,
 Who will not drink until he can define
 What water is and is not. But enough.
 My will to serve you now knows no division
 Save the alternate beat of love and fear.
 There's danger in this quest, — name, honour,
 life, —
 My lord, the stake is great, and are you sure . . .

DON SILVA.

No, I am sure of naught but this, SepharDO,
 That I will go. Prudence is but conceit
 Hoodwinked by ignorance. There's naught exists
 That is not dangerous and holds not death
 For souls or bodies. Prudence turns its helm
 To flee the storm and lands 'mid pestilence.
 Wisdom must end by throwing dice with folly
 But for dire passion which alone makes choice.
 And I have chosen as the lion robbed
 Chooses to turn upon the ravisher.
 If love were slack, the Prior's imperious will
 Would move it to outmatch him. But, SepharDO,
 Were all else mute, all passive as sea-calms,
 My soul is one great hunger, — I must see her.

Now you are smiling. Oh, you merciful men
 Pick up coarse griefs and fling them in the face
 Of us whom life with long descent has trained
 To subtler pains, mocking your ready balms.
 You smile at my soul's hunger

SEPHARDO.

Science smiles
 And sways our lips in spite of us, my lord,
 When thought weds fact,— when maiden prophecy
 Waiting, believing, sees the bridal torch.
 I use not vulgar measures for your grief,
 My pity keeps no cruel feasts; but thought
 Has joys apart, even in blackest woe,
 And seizing some fine thread of verity
 Knows momentary godhead.

DON SILVA.

And your thought?

SEPHARDO.

Seized on the close agreement of your words
 With what is written in your horoscope.

DON SILVA.

Reach it me now.

SEPHARDO.

By your leave, Annibal.

(He places ANNIBAL on PABLO'S lap and rises. The boy moves without waking, and his head falls on the opposite side. SEPHARDO fetches a cushion and lays PABLO'S head gently down upon it, then goes to reach the parchment from a cabinet. ANNIBAL, having waked up in alarm, shuts his eyes quickly again and pretends to sleep.)

DON SILVA.

I wish, by new appliance of your skill,
 Reading afresh the records of the sky,
 You could detect more special augury.
 Such chance oft happens, for all characters
 Must shrink or widen, as our wine-skins do,
 For more or less that we can pour in them;
 And added years give ever a new key
 To fixed prediction.

SEPHARDO (*returning with the parchment and reseating himself*).

True; our growing thought
 Makes growing revelation. But demand not
 Specific augury, as of sure success
 In meditated projects, or of ends
 To be foreknown by peeping in God's scroll.
 I say — nay, Ptolemy said it, but wise books
 For half the truths they hold are honoured tombs —
 Prediction is contingent, of effects
 Where causes and concomitants are mixed
 To seeming wealth of possibilities
 Beyond our reckoning. Who will pretend
 To tell the adventures of each single fish
 Within the Syrian Sea? Show me a fish,
 I'll weigh him, tell his kind, what he devoured,
 What would have devoured *him*, — but for one
 Blas
 Who netted him instead; nay, could I tell
 That had Blas missed him, he would not have
 died
 Of poisonous mud, and so made carrion,
 Swept off at last by some sea-scavenger?

DON SILVA.

Ay, now you talk of fishes, you get hard.
 I note you merciful men : you can endure
 Torture of fishes and hidalgos. Follows ?

SEPHARDO.

By how much, then, the fortunes of a man
 Are made of elements refined and mixed
 Beyond a tunny's, what our science tells
 Of the stars' influence hath contingency
 In special issues. Thus, the loadstone draws,
 Acts like a will to make the iron submiss ;
 But garlic rubbing it, that chief effect
 Lies in suspense ; the iron keeps at large,
 And garlic is controller of the stone.
 And so, my lord, your horoscope declares
 Naught absolutely of your sequent lot,
 But, by our lore's authentic rules, sets forth
 What gifts, what dispositions, likelihoods,
 The aspects of the heavens conspired to fuse
 With your incorporate soul. Aught more than
 this
 Is vulgar doctrine. For the ambient,
 Though a cause regnant, is not absolute,
 But suffers a determining restraint
 From action of the subject qualities
 In proximate motion.

DON SILVA.

Yet you smiled just now
 At some close fitting of my horoscope
 With present fact, — with this resolve of mine
 To quit the fortress ?

SEPHARDO.

Nay, not so, I smiled,
 Observing how the temper of your soul
 Sealed long tradition of the influence shed
 By the heavenly spheres. Here is your horoscope:
 The aspects of the moon with Mars conjunct,
 Of Venus and the Sun with Saturn, lord
 Of the ascendant, make symbolic speech
 Whereto your words gave running paraphrase.

DON SILVA (*impatently*).

What did I say ?

SEPHARDO.

You spoke as oft you did
 When I was schooling you at Córdoba,
 And lessons on the noun and verb were drowned
 With sudden stream of general debate
 On things and actions. Always in that stream
 I saw the play of babbling currents, saw
 A nature o'er-endowed with opposites
 Making a self alternate, where each hour
 Was critic of the last, each mood too strong
 For tolerance of its fellow in close yoke.
 The ardent planets stationed as supreme,
 Potent in action, suffer light malign
 From luminaries large and coldly bright
 Inspiring meditative doubt, which straight
 Doubts of itself, by interposing act
 Of Jupiter in the fourth house fortified
 With power ancestral. So, my lord, I read
 The changeless in the changing; so I read
 The constant action of celestial powers
 Mixed into waywardness of mortal men,

Whereof no sage's eye can trace the course
And see the close.

DON SILVA.

Fruitful result, O sage!
Certain uncertainty.

SEPHARDO.

Yea, a result
Fruitful as seeded earth, where certainty
Would be as barren as a globe of gold.
I love you, and would serve you well, my lord.
Your rashness vindicates itself too much,
Puts harshness on of cobweb theory
While rushing like a cataract. Be warned.
Resolve with you is a fire-breathing steed,
But it sees visions, and may feel the air
Impassable with thoughts that come too late,
Rising from out the grave of murdered honour.
Look at your image in your horoscope :

(Laying the horoscope before SILVA.)

You are so mixed, my lord, that each to-day
May seem a maniac to its morrow.

DON SILVA *(pushing away the horoscope, rising and turning to look out at the open window).*

No!

No morrow e'er will say that I am mad
Not to renounce her. Risks! I know them all.
I've dogged each lurking, ambushed consequence.
I've handled every chance to know its shape
As blind men handle bolts. Oh, I'm too sane,
I see the Prior's nets. He does my deed;
For he has narrowed all my life to this,—
That I must find her by some hidden means.

(He turns and stands close in front of SEPHARDO.)

One word, Sephardo, — leave that horoscope,
Which is but iteration of myself,
And give me promise. Shall I count on you
To act upon my signal? Kings of Spain
Like me have found their refuge in a Jew,
And trusted in his counsel. You will help me?

SEPHARDO.

Yes, my lord, I will help you. Israel
Is to the nations as the body's heart:
Thus saith the Book of Light: and I will act
So that no man may ever say through me
"Your Israel is naught," and make my deeds
The mud they fling upon my brethren.
I will not fail you, save, — you know the terms:
I am a Jew, and not that infamous life
That takes on bastardy, will know no father,
So shrouds itself in the pale abstract, Man.
You should be sacrificed to Israel
If Israel needed it.

DON SILVA.

I fear not that.
I am no friend of fines and banishment,
Or flames that, fed on heretics, still gape,
And must have heretics made to feed them still.
I take your terms, and, for the rest, your love
Will not forsake me.

SEPHARDO.

'T is hard Roman love,
That looks away and stretches forth the sword
Bared for its master's breast to run upon.
But you will have it so. Love shall obey.

*(SILVA turns to the window again, and is silent
for a few moments, looking at the sky.)*

DON SILVA.

See now, Sephardo, you would keep no faith
To smooth the path of cruelty. Confess,
The deed I would not do, save for the strait
Another brings me to (quit my command,
Resign it for brief space, I mean no more), —
Were that deed branded, then the brand should fix
On him who urged me.

SEPHARDO.

Will it, though, my lord?

DON SILVA.

I speak not of the fact, but of the right.

SEPHARDO.

My lord, you said but now you were resolved.
Question not if the world will be unjust
Branding your deed. If conscience has two courts
With differing verdicts, where shall lie the appeal?
Our law must be without us or within.
The Highest speaks through all our people's voice,
Custom, tradition, and old sanctities;
Or he reveals himself by new decrees
Of inward certitude.

DON SILVA.

My love for her
Makes highest law, must be the voice of God.

SEPHARDO.

I thought, but now, you seemed to make excuse,
And plead as in some court where Spanish knights
Are tried by other laws than those of love.

DON SILVA.

'T was momentary. I shall dare it all.
 How the great planet glows, and looks at me,
 And seems to pierce me with his effluence!
 Were he a living God, these rays that stir
 In me the pulse of wonder were in him
 Fulness of knowledge. Are you certified,
 Sephardo, that the astral science shrinks
 To such pale ashes, dead symbolic forms
 For that congenital mixture of effects
 Which life declares without the aid of lore?
 If there are times propitious or malign
 To our first framing, then must all events
 Have favouring periods: you cull your plants
 By signal of the heavens, then why not trace
 As others would by astrologic rule
 Times of good augury for momentous acts,—
 As secret journeys?

SEPHARDO.

O my lord, the stars
 Act not as witchcraft or as muttered spells.
 I said before they are not absolute,
 And tell no fortunes. I adhere alone
 To such tradition of their agencies
 As reason fortifies.

DON SILVA.

A barren science!
 Some argue now 't is folly. 'T were as well
 Be of their mind. If those bright stars had
 will,—
 But they are fatal fires, and know no love.
 Of old, I think, the world was happier

With many gods, who held a struggling life
As mortals do, and helped men in the straits
Of forced misdoing. I doubt that horoscope.

(DON SILVA *turns from the window and re-
seats himself opposite SEPHARDO.*)

I am most self-contained, and strong to bear.
No man save you has seen my trembling lip
Uttering her name, since she was lost to me.
I'll face the progeny of all my deeds.

SEPHARDO.

May they be fair! No horoscope makes slaves.
'T is but a mirror, shows one image forth,
And leaves the future dark with endless "ifs."

DON SILVA.

I marvel, my Sepharo, you can pinch
With confident selection these few grains,
And call them verity, from out the dust
Of crumbling error. Surely such thought creeps,
With insect exploration of the world.
Were I a Hebrew, now, I would be bold.
Why should you fear, not being Catholic?

SEPHARDO.

Lo! you yourself, my lord, mix subtleties
With gross belief; by momentary lapse
Conceive, with all the vulgar, that we Jews
Must hold ourselves God's outlaws, and defy
All good with blasphemy, because we hold
Your good is evil; think we must turn pale
To see our portraits painted in your hell,
And sin the more for knowing we are lost.

DON SILVA.

Read not my words with malice. I but meant,
My temper hates an over-cautious march.

SEPHARDO.

The Unnamable made not the search for truth
To suit hidalgos' temper. I abide
By that wise spirit of listening reverence
Which marks the boldest doctors of our race.
For truth, to us, is like a living child
Born of two parents: if the parents part
And will divide the child, how shall it live?
Or, I will rather say: Two angels guide
The path of man, both aged and yet young,
As angels are, ripening through endless years.
On one he leans: some call her Memory,
And some, Tradition; and her voice is sweet,
With deep mysterious accords: the other,
Floating above, holds down a lamp which streams
A light divine and searching on the earth,
Compelling eyes and footsteps. Memory yields,
Yet elings with loving check, and shines anew
Reflecting all the rays of that bright lamp
Our angel Reason holds. We had not walked
But for Tradition; we walk evermore
To higher paths, by brightening Reason's lamp.
Still we are purblind, tottering. I hold less
Than Aben-Ezra, of that aged lore
Brought by long centuries from Chaldaean plains;
The Jew-taught Florentine rejects it all.
For still the light is measured by the eye,
And the weak organ fails. I may see ill;
But over all belief is faithfulness,
Which fulfils vision with obedience.

So, I must grasp my morsels : truth is oft
 Scattered in fragments round a stately pile
 Built half of error ; and the eye's defect
 May breed too much denial. But, my lord,
 I weary your sick soul. Go now with me
 Into the turret. We will watch the spheres,
 And see the constellations bend and plunge
 Into a depth of being where our eyes
 Hold them no more. We'll quit ourselves and be
 The red Aldebaran or bright Sirius,
 And sail as in a solemn voyage, bound
 On some great quest we know not.

DON SILVA.

Let us go.

She may be watching too, and thought of her
 Sways me, as if she knew, to every act
 Of pure allegiance.

SEPHARDO.

That is love's perfection, —
 Tuning the soul to all her harmonies
 So that no chord can jar. Now we will mount.

(*Exeunt.*)

A large hall in the Castle, of Moorish architecture. On the side where the windows are, an outer gallery. Pages and other young gentlemen attached to DON SILVA'S household, gathered chiefly at one end of the hall. Some are moving about ; others are lounging on the carved benches ; others, half stretched on pieces of matting and carpet, are gambling. ARIAS, a stripling of fifteen, sings by snatches in a boyish treble, as he walks up and

down, and tosses back the nuts which another youth flings towards him. In the middle DON AMADOR, a gaunt, gray-haired soldier, in a handsome uniform, sits in a marble red-cushioned chair, with a large book spread out on his knees, from which he is reading aloud, while his voice is half drowned by the talk that is going on around him, first one voice and then another surging above the hum.

ARIAS (*singing*).

*There was a holy hermit
Who counted all things loss
For Christ his Master's glory :
He made an ivory cross,
And as he knelt before it
And wept his murdered Lord,
The ivory turned to iron,
The cross became a sword.*

JOSÉ (*from the floor*).

I say, twenty cruzados! thy Galician wit
Can never count.

HERNANDO (*also from the floor*).

And thy Sevillian wit always counts double.

ARIAS (*singing*).

*The tears that fell upon it,
They turned to red, red rust,
The tears that fell from off it
Made writing in the dust.
The holy hermit, gazing,
Saw words upon the ground :
" The sword be red forever
With the blood of false Mahound."*

DON AMADOR (*looking up from his book, and raising his voice*).

What, gentlemen! Our glorious Lady defend us!

ENRIQUEZ (*from the benches*).

Serves the infidels right! They have sold Christians enough to people half the towns in Paradise. If the Queen, now, had divided the pretty damsels of Malaga among the Castilians who have been helping in the holy war, and not sent half of them to Naples . . .

ARIAS (*singing again*).

*At the battle of Clavijo
In the days of King Ramiro,
Help us, Allah! cried the Moslem,
Cried the Spaniard, Heaven's chosen,
God and Santiago!*

FABIAN.

Oh, the very tail of our chance has vanished. The royal army is breaking up, — going home for the winter. The Grand Master sticks to his own border.

ARIAS (*singing*).

*Straight out-flushing like the rainbow,
See him come, celestial Baron,
Mounted knight, with red-crossed banner,
Plunging earthward to the battle,
Glorious Santiago!*

HURTADO.

Yes, yes, through the pass of By-and-by you go to the valley of Never. We might have done a great feat, if the Marquis of Cadiz . . .

ARIAS (*sings*).

*As the flame before the swift wind,
See, he fires us, we burn with him!
Flash our swords, dash Pagans backward, —
Victory he! pale fear is allah!
God with Santiago!*

DON AMADOR (*raising his voice to a cry*).

Sangre de Dios, gentlemen!

(He shuts the book, and lets it fall with a bang on the floor. There is instant silence.)

To what good end is it that I, who studied at Salamanca, and can write verses agreeable to the glorious Lady with the point of a sword which hath done harder service, am reading aloud in a clerkly manner from a book which hath been culled from the flowers of all books, to instruct you in the knowledge befitting those who would be knights and worthy hidalgos. I had as lief be reading in a belfry. And gambling too! As if it were a time when we needed not the help of God and the saints! Surely for the space of one hour ye might subdue your tongues to your ears that so your tongues might learn somewhat of civility and modesty. Wherefore am I master of the Duke's retinue, if my voice is to run along like a gutter in a storm?

HURTADO (*lifting up the book, and respectfully presenting it to DON AMADOR*).

Pardon, Don Amador! The air is so commoved by your voice, that it stirs our tongues in spite of us.

DON AMADOR (*reopening the book*).

Confess, now, it is a goose-headed trick, that when rational sounds are made for your edification, you find naught in it but an occasion for purposeless gabble. I will report it to the Duke, and the reading-time shall be doubled, and my office of reader shall be handed over to Fray Domingo.

(*While DON AMADOR has been speaking, DON SILVA, with DON ALVAR, has appeared walking in the outer gallery on which the windows are opened.*)

ALL (*in concert*).

No, no, no.

DON AMADOR.

Are ye ready, then, to listen, if I finish the wholesome extract from the Seven Parts, wherein the wise King Alfonso hath set down the reason why knights should be of gentle birth? Will ye now be silent?

ALL.

Yes, silent.

DON AMADOR.

But when I pause, and look up, I give any leave to speak, if he hath aught pertinent to say.

(*Reads.*)

“And this nobility cometh in three ways: *first*, by lineage; *secondly*, by science; and *thirdly*, by valour and worthy behaviour. Now, although they who gain nobility through science or good deeds are

rightfully called noble and gentle; nevertheless, they are with the highest fitness so called who are noble by ancient lineage, and lead a worthy life as by inheritance from afar; and hence are more bound and constrained to act well, and guard themselves from error and wrong-doing; for in their case it is more true that by evil-doing they bring injury and shame not only on themselves, but also on those from whom they are derived."

(DON AMADOR *places his forefinger for a mark on the page, and looks up, while he keeps his voice raised, as wishing DON SILVA to overhear him in the judicious discharge of his function.*)

Hear ye that, young gentlemen? See ye not that if ye had but bad manners even, they disgrace you more than gross misdoings disgrace the low-born? Think you, Arias, it becomes the son of your house irreverently to sing and fling nuts, to the interruption of your elders?

ARIAS (*sitting on the floor and leaning backward on his elbows*).

Nay, Don Amador; King Alfonso, they say, was a heretic, and I think that is not true writing. For noble birth gives us more leave to do ill if we like.

DON AMADOR (*lifting his brows*).

What bold and blasphemous talk is this?

ARIAS.

Why, nobles are only punished now and then, in a grand way, and have their heads cut off, like the Grand Constable. I should n't mind that.

JOSÉ.

Nonsense, Arias! nobles have their heads cut off because their crimes are noble. If they did what was unknighly, they would come to shame. Is n't that true, Don Amador?

DON AMADOR.

Arias is a contumacious puppy, who will bring dishonour on his parentage. Pray, sirrah, whom did you ever hear speak as you have spoken?

ARIAS.

Nay, I speak out of my own head. I shall go and ask the Duke.

HURTADO.

Now, now! you are too bold, Arias.

ARIAS.

Oh, he is never angry with me (*dropping his voice*), because the Lady Fedalma liked me. She said I was a good boy, and pretty, and that is what you are not, Hurtado.

HURTADO.

Girl-face! See, now, if you dare ask the Duke.

(DON SILVA *is just entering the hall from the gallery, with ALVAR behind him, intending to pass out at the other end. All rise with homage. DON SILVA bows coldly and abstractedly. ARIAS advances from the group, and goes up to DON SILVA.*)

ARIAS.

My lord, is it true that a noble is more dishonoured than other men if he does aught dishonourable?

DON SILVA (*first blushing deeply, and grasping his sword, then raising his hand and giving Arias a blow on the ear*).

Varlet!

ARIAS.

My lord, I am a gentleman.

(DON SILVA *pushes him away, and passes on hurriedly*.)

DON ALVAR (*following and turning to speak*).

Go, go! you should not speak to the Duke when you are not called upon. He is ill and much distempered.

(ARIAS *retires, flushed, with tears in his eyes. His companions look too much surprised to triumph. DON AMADOR remains silent and confused*.)

The Plaza Santiago during busy market time. Mules and asses laden with fruits and vegetables. Stalls and booths filled with wares of all sorts. A crowd of buyers and sellers. A stalwart woman with keen eyes, leaning over the panniers of a mule laden with apples, watches LORENZO, who is lounging through the market. As he approaches her, he is met by BLASCO.

LORENZO.

Well met, friend.

BLASCO.

Ay, for we are soon to part,
And I would see you at the hostelry,
To take my reckoning. I go forth to-day.

LORENZO.

'Tis grievous parting with good company.
I would I had the gold to pay such guests
For all my pleasure in their talk.

BLASCO.

Why, yes ;

A solid-headed man of Aragon
Has matter in him that you Southerners lack.
You like my company, — 't is natural.
But, look you, I have done my business well,
Have sold and ta'en commissions. I come straight
From — you know who — I like not naming him.
I'm a thick man : you reach not my backbone
With any toothpick. But I tell you this :
He reached it with his eye, right to the marrow !
It gave me heart that I had plate to sell,
For, saint or no saint, a good silversmith
Is wanted for God's service ; and my plate —
He judged it well — bought nobly.

LORENZO.

A great man,

And holy !

BLASCO.

Yes, I'm glad I leave to-day.
For there are stories give a sort of smell, —
One's nose has fancies. A good trader, sir,

Likes not this plague of lapsing in the air,
 Most caught by men with funds. And they *do*
 say
 There's a great terror here in Moors and Jews,
 I would say, Christians of unhappy blood.
 'Tis monstrous, sure, that men of substance lapse,
 And risk their property. I know I'm sound.
 No heresy was ever bait to me. Whate'er
 Is the right faith, that I believe, — naught else.

LORENZO.

Ay, truly, for the flavour of true faith
 Once known must sure be sweetest to the taste.
 But an uneasy mood is now abroad
 Within the town; partly, for that the Duke
 Being sorely sick, has yielded the command
 To Don Diego, a most valiant man,
 More Catholic than the Holy Father's self,
 Half chiding God that he will tolerate
 A Jew or Arab; though 't is plain they 're made
 For profit of good Christians. And weak heads —
 Panic will knit all disconnected facts —
 Draw hence belief in evil auguries,
 Rumours of accusation and arrest,
 All air-begotten. Sir, you need not go.
 But if it must be so, I'll follow you
 In fifteen minutes, — finish marketing,
 Then be at home to speed you on your way.

BLASCO.

Do so. I'll back to Saragossa straight.
 The court and nobles are retiring now
 And wending northward. There'll be fresh demand
 For bells and images against the Spring,

When doubtless our great Catholic sovereigns
 Will move to conquest of these eastern parts,
 And cleanse Granada from the infidel.
 Stay, sir, with God until we meet again!

LORENZO.

Go, sir, with God, until I follow you!

*(Exit BLASCO. LORENZO passes on towards
 the market-woman, who, as he approaches,
 raises herself from her leaning attitude.)*

LORENZO.

Good day, my mistress. How 's your merchandise?
 Fit for a host to buy? Your apples now,
 They have fair cheeks; how are they at the core?

MARKET-WOMAN.

Good, good, sir! Taste and try. See, here is
 one
 Weighs a man's head. The best are bound with
 tow:
 They 're worth the pains, to keep the peel from
 splits.

*(She takes out an apple bound with tow, and,
 as she puts it into LORENZO'S hand, speaks
 in a lower tone.)*

'T is called the Miracle. You open it,
 And find it full of speech.

LORENZO.

Ay, give it me,
 I'll take it to the Doctor in the tower.
 He feeds on fruit, and if he likes the sort

I'll buy them for him. Meanwhile, drive your ass
 Round to my hostelry. I'll straight be there.
 You'll not refuse some barter?

MARKET-WOMAN.

No, not I.

Feathers and skins.

LORENZO.

Good, till we meet again.

(LORENZO, *after smelling at the apple, puts it into a pouch-like basket which hangs before him, and walks away. The woman drives off the mule.*)

A LETTER.

“Zarca, the chief of the Zincali, greets
 The King El Zagal. Let the force be sent
 With utmost swiftness to the Pass of Luz.
 A good five hundred added to my bands
 Will master all the garrison: the town
 Is half with us, and will not lift an arm
 Save on our side. My scouts have found a way
 Where once we thought the fortress most secure:
 Spying a man upon the height, they traced,
 By keen conjecture piercing broken sight,
 His downward path, and found its issue. There
 A file of us can mount, surprise the fort
 And give the signal to our friends within
 To ope the gates for our confederate bands,
 Who will lie eastward ambushed by the rocks,
 Waiting the night. Enough; give me command,
 Bedmár is yours. Chief Zarca will redeem
 His pledge of highest service to the Moor:

Let the Moor, too, be faithful and repay
The Gypsy with the furtherance he needs
To lead his people over Bahr el Scham
And plant them on the shore of Africa.
So may the King El Zagal live as one
Who, trusting Allah will be true to him,
Maketh himself as Allah true to friends."

BOOK III.

QUIT now the town, and with a journeying dream
Swift as the wings of sound yet seeming slow
Through multitudinous compression of stored sense
And spiritual space, see walls and towers
Lie in the silent whiteness of a trance,
Giving no sign of that warm life within
That moves and murmurs through their hidden
heart.

Pass o'er the mountain, wind in sombre shade,
Then wind into the light and see the town
Shrunk to white crust upon the darken rock.
Turn east and south, descend, then rise anew
'Mid smaller mountains ebbing towards the plain:
Scent the fresh breath of the height loving herbs
That, trodden by the pretty parted hoofs
Of nimble goats, sigh at the innocent bruise,
And with a mingled difference exquisite
Pour a sweet burden on the buoyant air.
Pause now and be all ear. Far from the south,
Seeking the listening silence of the heights,
Comes a slow-dying sound,— the Moslems' call
To prayer in afternoon. Bright in the sun
Like tall white sails on a green shadowy sea
Stand Moorish watch-towers: 'neath that eastern
sky.

Couches unseen the strength of Moorish Baza:
Where the meridian bends lies Guadix, hold
Of brave El Zagal. This is Moorish land,

Where Allah lives unconquered in dark breasts
And blesses still the many-nourishing earth
With dark-armed industry. See from the steep
The scattered olives hurry in gray throngs
Down towards the valley, where the little stream
Parts a green hollow 'twixt the gentler slopes ;
And in that hollow, dwellings : not white homes
Of building Moors, but little swarthy tents
Such as of old perhaps on Asian plains,
Or wending westward past the Caucasus,
Our fathers raised to rest in. Close they swarm
About two taller tents, and viewed afar
Might seem a dark-robed crowd in penitence
That silent kneel ; but come now in their midst
And watch a busy, bright-eyed, sportive life !
Tall maidens bend to feed the tethered goat,
The ragged kirtle fringing at the knee
Above the living curves, the shoulder's smoothness
Parting the torrent strong of ebon hair.
Women with babes, the wild and neutral glance
Swayed now to sweet desire of mothers' eyes,
Rock their strong cradling arms and chant low
 strains
Taught by monotonous and soothing winds
That fall at night-time on the dozing ear.
The crones plait reeds, or shred the vivid herbs
Into the caldron : tiny urchins crawl
Or sit and gurgle forth their infant joy.
Lads lying sphinx-like with uplifted breast
Propped on their elbows, their black manes tossed
 back,
Fling up the coin and watch its fatal fall,
Dispute and scramble, run and wrestle fierce,
Then fall to play and fellowship again ;
Or in a thieving swarm they run to plague

The grandsires, who return with rabbits slung,
And with the mules fruit-laden from the fields.
Some striplings choose the smooth stones from the
brook

To serve the slingers, cut the twigs for snares,
Or trim the hazel-wands, or at the bark
Of some exploring dog they dart away
With swift precision towards a moving speck.
These are the brood of Zarea's Gypsy tribe;
Most like an earth-born race bred by the Sun
On some rich tropic soil, the father's light
Flashing in coal black eyes, the mother's blood
With bounteous elements feeding their young limbs.
The stalwart men and youths are at the wars
Following their chief, all save a trusty band
Who keep strict watch along the northern heights.

But see, upon a pleasant spot removed
From the camp's hubbub, where the thicket strong
Of huge-eared cactus makes a bordering curve
And casts a shadow, lies a sleeping man
With Spanish hat screening his upturned face,
His doublet loose, his right arm backward flung,
His left caressing close the long-necked lute
That seems to sleep too, leaning tow'rd its lord.
He draws deep breath secure but not unwatched.
Moving a-tiptoe, silent as the elves,
As mischievous too, trip three barefooted girls
Not opened yet to womanhood, — dark flowers
In slim long buds: some paces farther off
Gathers a little white-teethed shaggy group,
A grinning chorus to the merry play.
The tripping girls have robbed the sleeping man
Of all his ornaments. Hita is decked
With an embroidered scarf across her rags;

Tralla, with thorns for pins, sticks two rosettes
 Upon her threadbare woollen; Hinda now,
 Prettiest and boldest, tucks her kirtle up
 As wallet for the stolen buttons, — then
 Bends with her knife to cut from off the hat
 The aigrette and the feather; deftly cuts,
 Yet wakes the sleeper, who with sudden start
 Shakes off the masking hat and shows the face
 Of Juan: Hinda swift as thought leaps back,
 But carries off the feather and aigrette,
 And leads the chorus of a happy laugh,
 Running with all the naked-footed imps,
 Till with safe survey all can face about
 And watch for signs of stimulating chase,
 While Hinda ties long grass around her brow
 To stick the feather in with majesty.
 Juan still sits contemplative, with looks
 Alternate at the spoilers and their work.

JUAN.

Ah, you marauding kite, — my feather gone!
 My belt, my scarf, my buttons and rosettes!
 This is to be a brother of Zincali!
 The fiery-blooded children of the Sun, —
 So says chief Zarca, — children of the Sun!
 Ay, ay, the black and stinging flies he breeds
 To plague the decent body of mankind.
 Orpheus, professor of the *gai saber*,
 Made all the brutes polite, they say, by dint of song.
 Pregnant, — but as a guide in daily life
 Delusive. For if song and music cure
 The barbarous trick of thieving, 't is a cure
 That works as slowly as old Doctor Time
 In curing folly. Why, the minxes there
 Have rhythm in their toes, and music rings

As readily from them as from little bells
 Swung by the breeze. Well, I will try the physic.
(He touches his lute.)

Hem! taken rightly, any single thing
 The Rabbis say, implies all other things.
 A knotty task, though, the unravelling
Meum and *Tuum* from a saraband:
 It needs a subtle logic, nay, perhaps
 A good large property, to see the thread.
(He touches the lute again.)

There 's more of odd than even in this world,
 Else pretty sinners would not be let off
 Sooner than ugly; for if honeycombs
 Are to be got by stealing, they should go
 Where life is bitterest on the tongue. And yet,—
 Because this minx has pretty ways I wink
 At all her tricks, though if a flat-faced lass,
 With eyes askew, were half as bold as she,
 I should chastise her with a hazel switch.
 I 'm a plucked peacock,—even my voice and wit
 Without a tail!—why, any fool detects
 The absence of your tail, but twenty fools
 May not detect the presence of your wit.
- (He touches his lute again.)

Well, I must coax my tail back cunningly,
 For to run after these brown lizards, — ah!
 I think the lizards lift their ears at this.

*(As he thrums his lute the lads and girls
 gradually approach: he touches it more
 briskly, and HINDA, advancing, begins to
 move arms and legs with an initiatory
 dancing movement, smiling coaxingly at
 JUAN. He suddenly stops, lays down his
 lute and folds his arms.)*

What, you expected a tune to dance to, eh?

HINDA, HITA, TRALLA, AND THE REST (*clapping their hands*).

Yes, yes, a tune, a tune!

JUAN.

But that is what you cannot have, my sweet brothers and sisters. The tunes are all dead, — dead as the tunes of the lark when you have plucked his wings off; dead as the song of the grasshopper when the ass has swallowed him. I can play and sing no more. Hinda has killed my tunes.

(*All cry out in consternation. HINDA gives a wail and tries to examine the lute. JUAN waves her off.*)

Understand, Señora Hinda, that the tunes are in me; they are not in the lute till I put them there. And if you cross my humour, I shall be as tuneless as a bag of wool. If the tunes are to be brought to life again, I must have my feather back.

(*HINDA kisses his hands and feet coaxingly.*)

No, no! not a note will come for coaxing. The feather, I say, the feather!

(*HINDA sorrowfully takes off the feather, and gives it to JUAN.*)

Ah, now let us see. Perhaps a tune will come.

(*He plays a measure, and the three girls begin to dance; then he suddenly stops.*)

No, the tune will not come: it wants the aigrette (*pointing to it on HINDA'S neck*).

(*HINDA, with rather less hesitation, but again sorrowfully, takes off the aigrette, and gives it to him.*)

Ha! (*he plays again, but, after rather a longer time, again stops.*) No, no; 't is the buttons are wanting, Hinda, the buttons. This tune feeds chiefly on buttons, — a hungry tune. It wants one, two, three, four, five, six. Good!

(*After HINDA has given up the buttons, and JUAN has laid them down one by one, he begins to play again, going on longer than before, so that the dancers become excited by the movement. Then he stops.*)

Ah, Hita, it is the belt, and, Tralla, the rosettes, — both are wanting. I see the tune will not go on without them.

(*HITA and TRALLA take off the belt and rosettes, and lay them down quickly, being fired by the dancing, and eager for the music. All the articles lie by JUAN'S side on the ground.*)

Good, good, my docile wild-cats! Now I think the tunes are all alive again. Now you may dance and sing too. Hinda, my little screamer, lead off with the song I taught you, and let us see if the tune will go right on from beginning to end.

(*He plays. The dance begins again, HINDA singing. — All the other boys and girls join in the chorus, and all at last dance wildly.*)

SONG.

*All things journey: sun and moon,
Morning, noon, and afternoon,
Night and all her stars:
'Twixt the east and western bars*

*Round they journey,
 Come and go!
 We go with them!
 For to roam and ever roam
 Is the wild Zincali's home.*

*Earth is good, the hillside breaks
 By the ashen roots and makes
 Hungry nostrils glad:
 Then we run till we are mad,
 Like the horses,
 And we cry,
 None shall catch us!
 Swift winds wing us, — we are free, —
 Drink the air, — Zincali we!*

*Falls the snow: the pine-branch split,
 Call the fire out, see it flit,
 Through the dry leaves run,
 Spread and glow, and make a sun
 In the dark tent:
 O warm dark!
 Warm as conies!
 Strong fire loves us, we are warm!
 Who shall work Zincali harm?*

*Onward journey: fires are spent;
 Sunward, sunward! lift the tent,
 Run before the ruin,
 Through the pass, along the plain.
 Hurry, hurry,
 Lift us, wind!
 Like the horses.
 For to roam and ever roam
 Is the wild Zincali's home.*

(When the dance is at its height, HINDA breaks away from the rest, and dances round JUAN, who is now standing. As he turns a little to watch her movement, some of the boys skip towards the feather, aigrette, &c., snatch them up, and run away, swiftly followed by HITA, TRALLA, and the rest. HINDA, as she turns again, sees them, screams, and falls in her whirling; but immediately gets up, and rushes after them, still screaming with rage)

JUAN.

Santiago! these imps get bolder. Haha! Señora Hinda, this finishes your lesson in ethics. You have seen the advantage of giving up stolen goods. Now you see the ugliness of thieving when practised by others. That fable of mine about the tunes was excellently devised. I feel like an ancient sage instructing our lisping ancestors. My memory will descend as the Orpheus of Gypsies. But I must prepare a rod for those rascals. I'll bastinado them with prickly pears. It seems to me these needles will have a sound moral teaching in them.

(While JUAN takes a knife from his belt, and surveys the prickly pear, HINDA returns.)

JUAN.

Pray, Señora, why do you fume? Did you want to steal my ornaments again yourself?

HINDA *(sobbing)*.

No; I thought you would give them me back again.

JUAN.

What, did you want the tunes to die again? Do you like finery better than dancing?

HINDA.

Oh, that was a tale; I shall tell tales too, when I want to get anything I can't steal. And I know what I will do. I shall tell the boys I've found some little foxes, and I will never say where they are till they give me back the feather!

(She runs off again.)

JUAN.

Hem! the disciple seems to seize the mode sooner than the matter. Teaching virtue with this prickly pear may only teach the youngsters to use a new weapon; as your teaching orthodoxy with fagots may only bring up a fashion of roasting. Dios! my remarks grow too pregnant,—my wits get a plethora by solitary feeding on the produce of my own wisdom.

(As he puts up his knife again, HINDA comes running back, and erylng, "Our Queen! our Queen!" JUAN adjusts his garments and his lute, while HINDA turns to meet FEDALMA, who wears a Moorish dress, with gold ornaments, her black hair hanging round her in plaits, a white turban on her head, a dagger by her side. She carries a scarf on her left arm, which she holds up as a shade.)

FEDALMA *(patting HINDA's head)*.

How now, wild one? You are hot and panting. Go to my tent, and help Nouna to plait reeds.

(HINDA *kisses* FEDALMA'S hand, and runs off.
 FEDALMA *advances* towards JUAN, who
kneels to take up the edge of her cymar,
 and *kisses* it.)

JUAN.

How is it with you, lady? You look sad.

FEDALMA.

Oh, I am sick at heart. The eye of day,
 The insistent summer sun, seems pitiless,
 Shining in all the barren crevices
 Of weary life, leaving no shade, no dark,
 Where I may dream that hidden waters lie;
 As pitiless as to some shipwrecked man,
 Who, gazing from his narrow shoal of sand
 On the wide unspoked round of blue and blue,
 Sees that full light is errorless despair.
 The insects' hum that slurs the silent dark
 Startles, and seems to cheat me, as the tread
 Of coming footsteps cheats the midnight watcher
 Who holds her heart and waits to hear them
 pause,
 And hears them never pause, but pass and die.
 Music sweeps by me as a messenger
 Carrying a message that is not for me.
 The very sameness of the hills and sky
 Is obduracy, and the lingering hours
 Wait round me dumbly, like superfluous slaves,
 Of whom I want naught but the secret news
 They are forbid to tell. And, Juan, you —
 You, too, are cruel — would be over-wise
 In judging your friend's needs, and choose to
 hide
 Something I crave to know.

JUAN.

I, lady?

FEDALMA.

You.

JUAN.

I never had the virtue to hide aught,
 Save what a man is whipped for publishing.
 I 'm no more reticent than the voluble air,—
 Dote on disclosure,— never could contain
 The latter half of all my sentences,
 But for the need to utter the beginning.
 My lust to tell is so importunate
 That it abridges every other vice,
 And makes me temperate for want of time.
 I dull sensation in the haste to say
 'T is this or that, and choke report with surmise.
 Judge, then, dear lady, if I could be mute
 When but a glance of yours had bid me speak.

FEDALMA.

Nay, sing such falsities! — you mock me worse
 By speech that gravely seems to ask belief.
 You are but babbling in a part you play
 To please my father. Oh, 't is well meant, say
 you,—
 Pity for woman's weakness. Take my thanks.

JUAN.

Thanks angrily bestowed are red-hot coin
 Burning your servant's palm.

FEDALMA.

Deny it not,
 You know how many leagues this camp of ours

Lies from Bedmár, — what mountains lie between, —
 Could tell me if you would about the Duke, —
 That he is comforted, sees how he gains
 By losing the Zincala, finds how slight
 The thread Fedalma made in that rich web,
 A Spanish noble's life. No, that is false!
 He never would think lightly of our love.
 Some evil has befallen him, — he 's slain, —
 Has sought for danger and has beckoned death
 Because I made all life seem treachery.
 Tell me the worst, — be merciful, — no worst,
 Against the hideous painting of my fear,
 Would not show like a better.

JUAN.

If I speak,

Will you believe your slave? For truth is scant;
 And where the appetite is still to hear
 And not believe, falsehood would stint it less.
 How say you? Does your hunger's fancy choose
 The meagre fact?

FEDALMA (*seating herself on the ground*).

Yes, yes, the truth, dear Juan.

Sit now, and tell me all.

JUAN.

That all is naught.

I can unleash my fancy if you wish
 And hunt for phantoms: shoot an airy guess
 And bring down airy likelihood, — some lie
 Masked cunningly to look like royal truth
 And cheat the shooter, while King Fact goes free,
 Or else some image of reality
 That doubt will handle and reject as false.

Ask for conjecture, — I can thread the sky
 Like any swallow, but, if you insist,
 On knowledge that would guide a pair of feet
 Right to Bedmár, across the Moorish bounds,
 A mule that dreams of stumbling over stones
 Is better stored.

FEDALMA.

And you have gathered naught
 About the border wars? No news, no hint
 Of any rumours that concern the Duke, —
 Rumours kept from me by my father?

JUAN.

None.

Your father trusts no secrets to the echoes.
 Of late his movements have been hid from all
 Save those few hundred picked Zincali breasts
 He carries with him. Think you he 's a man
 To let his projects slip from out his belt,
 Then whisper him who haps to find them strayed
 To be so kind as keep his counsel well?
 Why, if he found me knowing aught too much,
 He would straight gag or strangle me, and say,
 " Poor hound! it was a pity that his bark
 Could chance to mar my plans: he loved my
 daughter, —
 The idle hound had naught to do but love,
 So followed to the battle and got crushed."

FEDALMA (*holding out her hand, which JUAN kisses*).

Good Juan, I could have no nobler friend.
 You 'd ope your veins and let your life-blood out
 To save another's pain, yet hide the deed
 With jesting, — say, 't was merest accident,

A sportive scratch that went by chance too deep,—
 And die content with men's slight thought of you,
 Finding your glory in another's joy.

JUAN.

Dub not my likings virtues, lest they get
 A drug-like taste, and breed a nausea.
 Honey 's not sweet, commended as cathartic.
 Such names are parchment labels upon gems
 Hiding their colour. What is lovely seen
 Priced in a tariff?— lapis lazuli,
 Such bulk, so many drachmas: amethysts
 Quoted at so much; sapphires higher still.
 The stone like solid heaven in its blueness
 Is what I care for, not its name or price.
 So, if I live or die to serve my friend
 'T is for my love — 't is for my friend alone,
 And not for any rate that friendship bears
 In heaven or on earth. Nay, I romance,—
 I talk of Roland and the ancient peers.
 In me 't is hardly friendship, only lack
 Of a substantial self that holds a weight;
 So I kiss larger things and roll with them.

FEDALMA.

Nay, you will never hide your soul from me;
 I've seen the jewel's flash, and know 't is there,
 Muffle it as you will. That foam-like talk
 Will not wash out a fear which blots the good
 Your presence brings me. Oft I'm pierced afresh
 Through all the pressure of my selfish griefs
 By thought of you. It was a rash resolve
 Made you disclose yourself when you kept watch
 About the terrace wall:— your pity leaped
 Seeing my ills alone and not your loss,

Self-doomed to exile. Juan, you must repent.
 'T is not in nature that resolve, which feeds
 On strenuous actions, should not pine and die
 In these long days of empty listlessness.

JUAN.

Repent? Not I. Repentance is the weight
 Of indigested meals eat yesterday.
 'T is for large animals that gorge on prey,
 Not for a honey-sipping butterfly.
 I am a thing of rhythm and redondillas,—
 The momentary rainbow on the spray
 Made by the thundering torrent of men's lives:
 No matter whether I am here or there;
 I still catch sunbeams. And in Africa,
 Where melons and all fruits, they say, grow large,
 Fables are real, and the apes polite,
 A poet, too, may prosper past belief:
 I shall grow epic, like the Florentine,
 And sing the founding of our infant state,
 Sing the Zincalo's Carthage.

FEDALMA.

Africa!

Would we were there! Under another heaven,
 In lands where neither love nor memory
 Can plant a selfish hope,— in lands so far
 I should not seem to see the outstretched arms
 That seek me, or to hear the voice that calls.
 I should feel distance only and despair;
 So rest forever from the thought of bliss,
 And wear my weight of life's great chain unstrug-
 gling.
 Juan, if I could know he would forget,—

Nay, not forget, forgive me,— be content
 That I forsook him for no joy, but sorrow;
 For sorrow chosen rather than a joy
 That destiny made base! Then he would taste
 No bitterness in sweet, sad memory,
 And I should live unblemished in his thought,
 Hallowed like her who dies an unwed bride.
 Our words have wings, but fly not where we would.
 Could mine but reach him, Juan!

JUAN.

Speak but the wish,—
 My feet have wings,— I 'll be your Mercury.
 I fear no shadowed perils by the way.
 No man will wear the sharpness of his sword
 On me. Nay, I 'm a herald of the Muse,
 Sacred for Moors and Spaniards. I will go,—
 Will fetch you tidings for an amulet.
 But stretch not hope too strongly towards that mark
 As issue of my wandering. Given, I cross
 Safely the Moorish border, reach Bedmár:
 Fresh counsels may prevail there, and the Duke
 Being absent in the field, I may be trapped.
 Men who are sour at missing larger game
 May wing a chattering sparrow for revenge.
 It is a chance no further worth the note
 Than as a warning, lest you feared worse ill
 If my return were stayed. I might be caged;
 They would not harm me else. Untimely death,
 The red auxiliary of the skeleton,
 Has too much work on hand to think of me;
 Or, if he cares to slay me, I shall fall
 Choked with a grape-stone for economy.
 The likelier chance is that I go and come,
 Bringing you comfort back.

FEDALMA (*starts from her seat and walks to a little distance, standing a few moments with her back towards JUAN, then she turns round quickly, and goes towards him*).

No, Juan, no!

Those yearning words come from a soul infirm,
 Crying and struggling at the pain of bonds
 Which yet it would not loosen. He knows all,—
 All that he needs to know : I said farewell :
 I stepped across the cracking earth and knew
 'T would yawn behind me. I must walk right on.
 No, Juan, I will win naught by risking you :
 The possible loss would poison hope. Besides,
 'T were treachery in me : my father wills
 That we — all here — should rest within this camp.
 If I can never live, like him, on faith
 In glorious morrows, I am resolute.
 While he treads painfully with stillest step
 And beady brow, pressed 'neath the weight of arms,
 Shall I, to ease my fevered restlessness,
 Raise peevish moans, shattering that fragile silence ?
 No! On the close-thronged spaces of the earth
 A battle rages : Fate has carried me
 'Mid the thick arrows : I will keep my stand,—
 Not shrink and let the shaft pass by my breast
 To pierce another. Oh, 't is written large
 The thing I have to do. But you, dear Juan,
 Renounce, endure, are brave, unurged by aught
 Save the sweet overflow of your good will.

(*She seats herself again.*)

JUAN.

Nay, I endure naught worse than napping sheep,
 When nimble birds uproot a fleecy lock

To line their nest with. See! your bondsman,
 Queen,
 The minstrel of your court, is featherless;
 Deforms your presence by a moulting garb;
 Shows like a roadside bush culled of its buds.
 Yet, if your graciousness will not disdain
 A poor plucked songster,— shall he sing to you?
 Some lay of afternoons,— some ballad strain
 Of those who ached once but are sleeping now
 Under the sun-warmed flowers? 'T will cheat the
 time.

FEDALMA.

Thanks, Juan, later, when this hour is passed.
 My soul is clogged with self; it could not float
 On with the pleasing sadness of your song.
 Leave me in this green spot, but come again,—
 Come with the lengthening shadows.

JUAN.

Then your slave
 Will go to chase the robbers. Queen, farewell!

FEDALMA.

Best friend, my well-spring in the wilderness!

[While Juan sped along the stream, there came
 From the dark tents a ringing joyous shout
 That thrilled Fedalma with a summons grave
 Yet welcome too. Straightway she rose and
 stood,

All languor banished, with a soul suspense
 Like one who waits high presence, listening.
 Was it a message, or her father's self
 That made the camp so glad?

It was himself!

She saw him now advancing, girt with arms
That seemed like idle trophies hung for show
Beside the weight and fire of living strength
That made his frame. He glanced with absent
triumph,

As one who conquers in some field afar
And bears off unseen spoil. But nearing her,
His terrible eyes intense sent forth new rays,—
A sudden sunshine where the lightning was
'Twixt meeting dark. All tenderly he laid
His hand upon her shoulder; tenderly,
His kiss upon her brow.]

ZARCA.

My royal daughter!

FEDALMA.

Father, I joy to see your safe return.

ZARCA.

Nay, I but stole the time, as hungry men
Steal from the morrow's meal, made a forced march
Left Hassan as my watch-dog, all to see
My daughter, and to feed her famished hope
With news of promise.

FEDALMA.

Is the task achieved
That was to be the herald of our flight?

ZARCA.

Not outwardly, but to my inward vision
Things are achieved when they are well begun.
The perfect archer calls the deer his own

While yet the shaft is whistling. His keen eye
 Never sees failure, sees the mark alone.
 You have heard naught, then, — had no messenger ?

FEDALMA.

I, father ? no : each quiet day has fled
 Like the same moth, returning with slow wing,
 And pausing in the sunshine.

ZARCA.

It is well.

You shall not long count days in weariness.
 Ere the full moon has waned again to new,
 We shall reach Almería : Berber ships
 Will take us for their freight, and we shall go
 With plenteous spoil, not stolen, bravely won
 By service done on Spaniards. Do you shrink ?
 Are you aught less than a Zincala ?

FEDALMA.

No ;

But I am more. The Spaniards fostered me.

ZARCA.

They stole you first, and reared you for the flames.
 I found you, rescued you, that you might live
 A true Zincala's life ; else you were doomed.
 Your bridal bed had been the rack.

FEDALMA (*in a low tone*).

They meant --

To seize me ? — ere he came ?

ZARCA.

Yes, I know all.

They found your chamber empty.

FEDALMA (*eagerly*).

Then you know,—

(*Checking herself.*)

Father, my soul would be less laggard, fed
With fuller trust.

ZARCA.

My daughter, I must keep
The Arab's secret. Arabs are our friends,
Grappling for life with Christians who lay waste
Granada's valleys, and with devilish hoofs
Trample the young green corn, with devilish play
Fell blossomed trees, and tear up well-pruned
vines :

Cruel as tigers to the vanquished brave,
They wring out gold by oaths they mean to break ;
Take pay for pity and are pitiless ;
Then tinkle bells above the desolate earth,
And praise their monstrous gods, supposed to love
The flattery of liars. I will strike
The full-gorged dragon. You, my child, must
watch

The battle with a heart, not fluttering
But duteous, firm-weighted by resolve,
Choosing between two lives, like her who holds
A dagger which must pierce one of two breasts,
And one of them her father's. Nay, you divine, —
I speak not closely, but in parables ;
Put one for many.

FEDALMA (*collecting herself, and looking firmly at
ZARCA*).

Then it is your will
That I ask nothing ?

ZARCA.

You shall know enough
 To trace the sequence of the seed and flower.
 El Zagal trusts me, rates my counsel high :
 He, knowing I have won a grant of lands
 Within the Berber's realm, wills me to be
 The tongue of his good cause in Africa,
 So gives us furtherance in our pilgrimage
 For service hoped, as well as service done
 In that great feat of which I am the eye,
 And my three hundred Gypsies the best arm.
 More, I am charged by other noble Moors
 With messages of weight to Telemsán.
 Ha, your eye flashes. Are you glad ?

FEDALMA.

Yes, glad
 That men are forced to honour a Zinealo.

ZARCA.

Oh, fighting for dear life men choose their swords
 For cutting only, not for ornament.
 What naught but Nature gives, man takes per-
 force
 Where she bestows it, though in vilest place.
 Can he compress invention out of pride,
 Make heirship do the work of muscle, sail
 Towards great discoveries with a pedigree ?
 Sick men ask cures, and Nature serves not hers
 Daintily as a feast. A blacksmith once
 Founded a dynasty and raised on high
 The leathern apron over armies spread
 Between the mountains like a lake of steel.

FEDALMA (*bitterly*).

To be contemned, then, is fair augury.
That pledge of future good at least is ours.

ZARCA.

Let men contemn us: 't is such blind contempt
That leaves the wingéd broods to thrive in warmth
Unheeded, till they fill the air like storms.
So we shall thrive,— still darkly shall draw force
Into a new and multitudinous life
That likeness fashions to community,
Mother divine of customs, faith, and laws.
'T is ripeness, 't is fame's zenith that kills hope.
Huge oaks are dying, forests yet to come
Like in the twigs and rotten-seeming seeds.

FEDALMA.

And our Zineali? Under their poor husk
Do you discern such seed? You said our band
Was the best arm of some hard enterprise;
They give out sparks of virtue, then, and show
There's metal in their earth?

ZARCA.

Ay, metal fine

In my brave Gypsies. Not the lithest Moor
Has lither limbs for scaling, keener eye
To mark the meaning of the farthest speck
That tells of change; and they are disciplined
By faith in me, to such obedience
As needs no spy. My scalers and my scouts
Are to the Moorish force they're leagued withal
As bow-string to the bow; while I their chief
Command the enterprise and guide the will

Of Moorish captains, as the pilot guides
 With eye-instructed hand the passive helm.
 For high device is still the highest force,
 And he who holds the secret of the wheel
 May make the rivers do what work he would.
 With thoughts impalpable we clutch men's souls,
 Weaken the joints of armies, make them fly
 Like dust and leaves before the viewless wind.
 Tell me what 's mirrored in the tiger's heart,
 I'll rule that too.

FEDALMA (*wrought to a glow of admiration*).

O my imperial father!
 'T is where there breathes a mighty soul like yours
 That men's contempt is of good augury.

ZARCA (*seizing both FEDALMA'S hands, and looking
 at her searchingly*).

And you, my daughter, are you not the child
 Of the Zincalo? Does not his great hope
 Thrill in your veins like shouts of victory?
 'T is a vile life that like a garden pool
 Lies stagnant in the round of personal loves;
 That has no ear save for the tickling lute
 Set to small measures, — deaf to all the beats
 Of that large music rolling o'er the world:
 A miserable, petty, low-roofed life,
 That knows the mighty orbits of the skies
 Through naught save light or dark in its own cabin.
 The very brutes will feel the force of kind
 And move together, gathering a new soul,—
 The soul of multitudes. Say now, my child,
 You will not falter, not look back and long
 For unfledged ease in some soft alien nest.
 The crane with outspread wing that heads the file

Pauses not, feels no backward impulses :
Behind it summer was, and is no more ;
Before it lies the summer it will reach
Or fall in the mid-ocean. And you no less
Must feel the force sublime of growing life.
New thoughts are urgent as the growth of wings ;
The widening vision is imperious
As higher members bursting the worm's sheath.
You cannot grovel in the worm's delights :
You must take wingéd pleasures, wingéd pains.
Are you not steadfast ? Will you live or die
For aught below your royal heritage ?
To him who holds the flickering brief torch
That lights a beacon for the perishing,
Aught else is crime. Are you a false Zinca ?

FEDALMA.

Father, my soul is weak, the mist of tears
Still rises to my eyes, and hides the goal
Which to your undimmed sight is clear and change-
less.
But if I cannot plant resolve on hope
It will stand firm on certainty of woe.
I choose the ill that is most like to end
With my poor being. Hopes have precarious life.
They are oft blighted, withered, snapped sheer off
In vigorous growth and turned to rottenness.
But faithfulness can feed on suffering,
And knows no disappointment. Trust in me !
If it were needed, this poor trembling hand
Should grasp the torch, — strive not to let it fall
Though it were burning down close to my flesh,
No beacon lighted yet : through the damp dark
I should still hear the cry of gasping swimmers.
Father, I will be true !

ZARCA.

I trust that word.
 And, for your sadness, — you are young, — the
 bruise
 Will leave no mark. The worst of misery
 Is when a nature framed for noblest things
 Condemns itself in youth to petty joys,
 And, sore athirst for air, breathes scanty life
 Gasping from out the shallows. You are saved
 From such poor doubleness. The life we choose
 Breathes high, and sees a full-arched firmament.
 Our deeds shall speak like rock-hewn messages,
 Teaching great purpose to the distant time.
 Now I must hasten back. I shall but speak
 To Nadar of the order he must keep
 In setting watch and victualling. The stars
 And the young moon must see me at my post.
 Nay, rest you here. Farewell, my younger self, —
 Strong-hearted daughter! Shall I live in you
 When the earth covers me?

FEDALMA.

My father, death
 Should give your will divineness, make it strong
 With the beseechings of a mighty soul
 That left its work unfinished. Kiss me now:

*(They embrace, and she adds tremulously as
 they part.)*

And when you see fair hair be pitiful.

[Exit ZARCA.

*(FEDALMA seats herself on the bunk, leans her
 head forward, and covers her face with her
 drapery. While she is seated thus, HINDA*

comes from the bank, with a branch of musk roses in her hand. Seeing FEDALMA with head bent and covered, she pauses, and begins to move on tiptoe.)

HINDA.

Our Queen! Can she be crying? There she sits
As I did every day when my dog Saad
Sickened and yelled, and seemed to yell so loud
After we 'd buried him, I oped his grave.

(She comes forward on tiptoe, kneels at FEDALMA'S feet, and embraces them. FEDALMA uncovers her head.)

FEDALMA.

Hinda! what is it?

HINDA.

Queen, a branch of roses, —
So sweet, you'll love to smell them. 'T was the
last.

I climbed the bank to get it before Tralla,
And slipped and scratched my arm. But I don't
mind.

You love the roses, — so do I. I wish
The sky would rain down roses, as they rain
From off the shaken bush. Why will it not?
Then all the valley would be pink and white
And soft to tread on. They would fall as light
As feathers, smelling sweet; and it would be
Like sleeping and yet waking, all at once!
Over the sea, Queen, where we soon shall go,
Will it rain roses?

FEDALMA.

No, my prattler, no!

It never will rain roses: when we want
To have more roses we must plant more trees.
But you want nothing, little one, — the world
Just suits you as it suits the tawny squirrels.
Come, you want nothing.

HINDA.

Yes, I want more berries, —
Red ones, — to wind about my neck and arms
When I am married, — on my ankles too
I want to wind red berries, and on my head.

FEDALMA.

Who is it you are fond of? Tell me, now.

HINDA.

O Queen, you know! It could be no one else
But Ismaël. He catches birds, — no end!
Knows where the speckled fish are, scales the rocks
And sings and dances with me when I like.
How should I marry and not marry him?

FEDALMA.

Should you have loved him, had he been a Moor,
Or white Castilian?

HINDA (*starting to her feet, then kneeling again*).

Are you angry, Queen?

Say why you will think shame of your poor Hinda?
She'd sooner be a rat and hang on thorns
To parch until the wind had scattered her,
Than be an outcast, spit at by her tribe.

FEDALMA.

Hinda, I know you are a good Zincala.
 But would you part from Ismaël? leave him now
 If your chief bade you, — said it was for good
 To all your tribe that you must part from him?

HINDA (*giving a sharp cry*).

Ah, will he say so?

FEDALMA (*almost fierce in her earnestness*).

Nay, child, answer me.

Could you leave Ismaël? get into a boat
 And see the waters widen 'twixt you two
 Till all was water and you saw him not,
 And knew that you would never see him more?
 If 't was your chief's command, and if he said
 Your tribe would all be slaughtered, die of plague,
 Of famine, — madly drink each other's blood

HINDA (*trembling*).

O Queen, if it is so, tell Ismaël.

FEDALMA.

You would obey, then? part from him forever?

HINDA.

How could we live else? With our brethren
 lost? —

No marriage feast? The day would turn to dark.
 Zincali cannot live without their tribe.

I must obey! Poor Ismaël — poor Hinda!
 But will it ever be so cold and dark?

Oh, I would sit upon the rocks and cry,
 And cry so long that I could cry no more:
 Then I should go to sleep.

FEDALMA.

No, Hinda, no!
 Thou never shalt be called to part from him.
 I will have berries for thee, red and black,
 And I will be so glad to see thee glad,
 That earth will seem to hold enough of joy
 To outweigh all the pangs of those who part.
 Be comforted, bright eyes. See, I will tie
 These roses in a crown, for thee to wear.

HINDA (*clapping her hands, while FEDALMA puts the roses on her head*).

Oh, I'm as glad as many little foxes, —
 I will find Ismaël, and tell him all. (*She runs off.*)

FEDALMA (*alone*).

She has the strength I lack. Within her world
 The dial has not stirred since first she woke:
 No changing light has made the shadows die,
 And taught her trusting soul sad difference.
 For her, good, right, and law are all summed up
 In what is possible; life is one web
 Where love, joy, kindred, and obedience
 Lie fast and even, in one warp and woof
 With thirst and drinking, hunger, food, and sleep.
 She knows no struggles, sees no double path:
 Her fate is freedom, for her will is one
 With the Zincalo's law, the only law
 She ever knew. For me — oh, I have fire within,
 But on my will there falls the chilling snow
 Of thoughts that come as subtly as soft flakes,
 Yet press at last with hard and icy weight.
 I could be firm, could give myself the wrench
 And walk erect, hiding my life-long wound,

If I but saw the fruit of all my pain
 With that strong vision which commands the soul,
 And makes great awe the monarch of desire.
 But now I totter, seeing no far goal:
 I tread the rocky pass, and pause and grasp,
 Guided by flashes. When my father comes,
 And breathes into my soul his generous hope, —
 By his own greatness making life seem great,
 As the clear heavens bring sublimity,
 And show earth larger, spanned by that blue vast, —
 Resolve is strong: I can embrace my sorrow,
 Nor nicely weigh the fruit; possessed with need
 Solely to do the noblest, though it failed, —
 Though lava streamed upon my breathing deed
 And buried it in night and barrenness.
 But soon the glow dies out, the warrior's music
 That vibrated as strength through all my limbs
 Is heard no longer; over the wide scene
 There's naught but chill gray silence, or the hum
 And fitful discord of a vulgar world.
 Then I sink helpless, — sink into the arms
 Of all sweet memories, and dream of bliss:
 See looks that penetrate like tones; hear tones
 That flash looks with them. Even now I feel
 Soft airs enwrap me, as if yearning rays
 Of some far presence touched me with their warmth
 And brought a tender murmuring. . . .

[While she mused,

A figure came from out the olive-trees
 That bent close-whispering 'twixt the parted hills
 Beyond the crescent of thick cactus: paused
 At sight of her; then slowly forward moved
 With careful step, and gently said, "FEDALMA!"
 Fearing lest fancy had enslaved her sense,

She quivered, rose, but turned not. Soon again :
 "FEDALMA, it is SILVA!" Then she turned.
 He, with bared head and arms entreating, beamed
 Like morning on her. Vision held her still
 One moment, then with gliding motion swift,
 Inevitable as the melting stream's,
 She found her rest within his circling arms.]

FEDALMA.

*

O love, you are living, and believe in me!

DON SILVA.

Once more we are together. Wishing dies, —
 Stifled with bliss.

FEDALMA.

You did not hate me, then, —
 Think me an ingrate, — think my love was small
 That I forsook you?

DON SILVA.

Dear, I trusted you
 As holy men trust God. You could do naught
 That was not pure and loving, — though the deed
 Might pierce me unto death. You had less trust,
 Since you suspected mine. 'T was wicked doubt.

FEDALMA.

Nay, when I saw you hating me the fault
 Seemed in my lot, — the poor Zincala's, — her
 On whom you lavished all your wealth of love
 As price of naught but sorrow. Then I said,
 " 'T is better so. He will be happier!"
 But soon that thought, struggling to be a hope,
 Would end in tears.

DON SILVA.

It was a cruel thought.
 Happier! True misery is not begun
 Until I cease to love thee.

FEDALMA.

Silva!

DON SILVA.

Mine!

(They stand a moment or two in silence.)

FEDALMA.

I thought I had so much to tell you, love, —
 Long eloquent stories, — how it all befell, —
 The solemn message, calling me away
 To awful spousals, where my own dead joy,
 A conscious ghost, looked on and saw me wed.

DON SILVA.

Oh that grave speech would cumber our quick souls
 Like bells that waste the moments with their loud-
 ness.

FEDALMA.

And if it all were said, 't would end in this,
 That I still loved you when I fled away.
 'T is no more wisdom than the little birds
 Make known by their soft twitter when they feel
 Each other's heart beat.

DON SILVA.

All the deepest things
 We now say with our eyes and meeting pulse :
 Our voices need but prattle.

FEDALMA.

I forget

All the drear days of thirst in this one draught.

(Again they are silent for a few moments.)

But tell me how you came? Where are your
guards?

Is there no risk? And now I look at you,
This garb is strange . . .

DON SILVA.

I came alone.

FEDALMA.

Alone?

DON SILVA.

Yes,—fled in secret. There was no way else
To find you safely.

FEDALMA *(letting one hand fall and moving a little
from him with a look of sudden terror, while he
clasps her more firmly by the other arm).*

Silva!

DON SILVA.

It is naught.

Enough that I am here. Now we will cling.
What power shall hinder us? You left me once
To set your father free. That task is done,
And you are mine again. I have braved all
That I might find you, see your father, win
His furtherance in bearing you away
To some safe refuge. Are we not betrothed?

FEDALMA.

Oh, I am trembling 'neath the rush of thoughts
That come like griefs at morning, — look at me
With awful faces, from the vanishing haze
That momentarily had hidden them.

DON SILVA.

What thoughts?

FEDALMA.

Forgotten burials. There lies a grave
Between this visionary present and the past.
Our joy is dead, and only smiles on us
A loving shade from out the place of tombs.

DON SILVA.

Fedalma, your love faints, else aught that parts us
Would seem but superstition. Love supreme
Defies all sophistry, — risks avenging fires.
I have risked all things. But your love is faint.

FEDALMA (*retreating a little, but keeping his hand*).
Silva, if now between us came a sword,
Severed my arm, and left our two hands clasped,
This poor maimed arm would feel the clasp till
death.

What parts us is a sword . . .

(ZARCA *has been advancing in the back-ground. He has drawn his sword, and now thrusts the naked blade between them. SILVA lets go FEDALMA'S hand, and grasps his sword. FEDALMA, startled at first, stands firmly, as if prepared to interpose between her father and the Duke.*)

ZARCA.

Ay, 't is a sword

That parts the Spanish noble and the true Zincola :
 A sword that was baptized in Christian blood,
 When once a band, cloaking with Spanish law
 Their brutal rapine, would have butchered us,
 And then outraged our women.

(Resting the point of his sword on the ground.)

My lord Duke,

I was a guest within your fortress once
 Against my will ; had entertainment too,—
 Much like a galley slave's. Pray, have you sought
 The poor Zincola's camp, to find return
 For that Castilian courtesy ? or rather
 To make amends for all our prisoned toil
 By this great honour of your unasked presence ?

DON SILVA.

Chief, I have brought no scorn to meet your
 scorn.

I came because love urged me,— that deep love
 I bear to her whom you call daughter,— her
 Whom I reclaim as my betrothéd bride.

ZARCA.

Doubtless you bring for final argument
 Your men-at-arms who will escort your bride ?

DON SILVA.

I came alone. The only force I bring
 Is tenderness. Nay, I will trust besides
 In all the pleadings of a father's care
 To wed his daughter as her nurture bids.

*“Ay, ’t is a sword
That parts the Spanish noble and the true Zinca.”*

Photo-Etching.—From Painting by W. St. John Harper.



And for your tribe, — whatever purposed good
 Your thoughts may cherish, I will make secure
 With the strong surety of a noble's power :
 My wealth shall be your treasury.

ZARCA (*with irony*).

My thanks!

To me you offer liberal price ; for her
 Your love's beseeching will be force supreme.
 She will go with you as a willing slave,
 Will give a word of parting to her father,
 Wave farewells to her tribe, then turn and say :
 " Now, my lord, I am nothing but your bride ;
 I am quite cull'd, have neither root nor trunk,
 Now wear me with your plume ! "

DON SILVA.

Yours is the wrong

Feigning in me one thought of her below
 The highest homage. I would make my rank
 The pedestal of her worth ; a noble's sword,
 A noble's honour, her defence ; his love
 The life-long sanctuary of her womanhood.

ZARCA.

I tell you, were you King of Aragon,
 And won my daughter's hand, your higher rank
 Would blacken her dishonour. 'T were excuse
 If you were beggared, homeless, spit upon,
 And so made even with her people's lot ;
 For then she would be lured by want, not wealth,
 To be a wife amongst an alien race
 To whom her tribe owes curses.

DON SILVA.

Such blind hate

Is fit for beasts of prey, but not for men.
 My hostile acts against you should but count
 As ignorant strokes against a friend unknown;
 And for the wrongs inflicted on your tribe
 By Spanish edicts or the cruelty
 Of Spanish vassals, am I criminal?
 Love comes to cancel all ancestral hate,
 Subdues all heritage, proves that in mankind
 Union is deeper than division.

ZARCA.

Ay,

Such love is common: I have seen it oft,—
 Seen many women rend the sacred ties
 That bind them in high fellowship with men,
 Making them mothers of a people's virtue;
 Seen them so levelled to a handsome steed
 That yesterday was Moorish property,
 To-day is Christian,—wears new-fashioned gear,
 Neighs to new feeders, and will prance alike
 Under all banners, so the banner be
 A master's who caresses. Such light change
 You call conversion; we Zincali call
 Conversion infamy. Our people's faith
 Is faithfulness; not the rote-learned belief
 That we are heaven's highest favourites,
 But the resolve that, being most forsaken
 Among the sons of men, we will be true
 Each to the other, and our common lot.
 You Christians burn men for their heresy:
 Our vilest heretic is that Zincala
 Who, choosing ease, forsakes her people's woes.
 The dowry of my daughter is to be

Chief woman of her tribe, and rescue it.
 A bride with such a dowry has no match
 Among the subjects of that Catholic Queen
 Who would have Gypsies swept into the sea
 Or else would have them gibbeted.

DON SILVA.

And you,

Fedalma's father, — you who claim the dues
 Of fatherhood, — will offer up her youth
 To mere grim idols of your fantasy!
 Worse than all Pagans, with no oracle
 To bid you murder, no sure good to win,
 Will sacrifice your daughter, — to no god,
 But to a hungry fire within your soul,
 Mad hopes, blind hate, that like possessing fiends
 Shriek at a name! This sweetest virgin, reared
 As garden flowers, to give the sordid world
 Glimpses of perfectness, you snatch and thrust
 On dreary wilds; in visions mad, proclaim
 Semiramis of Gypsy wanderers;
 Doom, with a broken arrow in her heart,
 To wait for death 'mid squalid savages:
 For what? You would be saviour of your tribe;
 So said Fedalma's letter; rather say,
 You have the will to save by ruling men,
 But first to rule; and with that flinty will
 You cut your way, though the first cut you give
 Gash your child's bosom.

(While SILVA has been speaking, with growing passion, FEDALMA has placed herself between him and her father.)

ZARCA *(with calm irony)*.

You are loud, my lord!
 You only are the reasonable man;

You have a heart, I none. Fedalma's good
Is what you see, you care for; while I seek
No good, not even my own, urged on by naught
But hellish hunger, which must still be fed
Though in the feeding it I suffer throes.
Fume at your own opinion as you will:
I speak not now to you, but to my daughter.
If she still calls it good to mate with you,
To be a Spanish duchess, kneel at court,
And hope her beauty is excuse to men
When women whisper, "She was a Zincala;"
If she still calls it good to take a lot
That measures joy for her as she forgets
Her kindred and her kindred's misery,
Nor feels the softness of her downy couch
Marred by remembrance that she once forsook
The place that she was born to,— let her go!
If life for her still lies in alien love,
That forces her to shut her soul from truth
As men in shameful pleasures shut out day;
And death, for her, is to do rarest deeds,
Which, even failing, leave new faith to men,
The faith in human hearts,— then, let her go!
She is my only offspring; in her veins
She bears the blood her tribe has trusted in;
Her heritage is their obedience,
And if I died, she might still lead them forth
To plant the race her lover now reviles
Where they may make a nation, and may rise
To grander manhood than his race can show;
Then live a goddess, sanctifying oaths,
Enforcing right, and ruling consciences,
By law deep-graven in exalting deeds,
Through the long ages of her people's life.
If she can leave that lot for silken shame,

For kisses honeyed by oblivion, —
 The bliss of drunkards or the blank of fools, —
 Then let her go! You Spanish Catholics,
 When you are cruel, base, and treacherous,
 For ends not pious, tender gifts to God,
 And for men's wounds offer much oil to churches:
 We have no altars for such healing gifts
 As soothe the heavens for outrage done on earth.
 We have no priesthood and no creed to teach
 That the Zincala who might save her race
 And yet abandons it, may cleanse that blot,
 And mend the curse her life has been to men,
 By saving her own soul. Her one base choice
 Is wrong unchangeable, is poison shed
 Where men must drink shed by her poisoning will.
 Now choose, Fedalma!

[But her choice was made.

Slowly, while yet her father spoke, she moved
 From where oblique with deprecating arms
 She stood between the two who swayed her heart:
 Slowly she moved to choose sublimer pain;
 Yearning, yet shrinking; wrought upon by awe,
 Her own brief life seeming a little isle
 Remote through visions of a wider world
 With fates close-crowded; firm to slay her joy
 That cut her heart with smiles beneath the knife,
 Like a sweet babe foredoomed by prophecy.
 She stood apart, yet near her father: stood
 Hand clutching hand, her limbs all tense with will
 That strove against her anguish, eyes that seemed
 a soul
 Yearning in death towards him she loved and left.
 He faced her, pale with passion and a will
 Fierce to resist whatever might seem strong

And ask him to submit: he saw one end,—
 He must be conqueror; monarch of his lot
 And not its tributary. But she spoke
 Tenderly, pleadingly.]

FEDALMA.

My lord, farewell!

'T was well we met once more; now we must part.
 I think we had the chief of all love's joys
 Only in knowing that we loved each other.

DON SILVA.

I thought we loved with love that clings till death,
 Clings as brute mothers bleeding to their young,
 Still sheltering, clutching it, though it were dead;
 Taking the death-wound sooner than divide.
 I thought we loved so.

FEDALMA.

Silva, it is fate.

Great Fate has made me heiress of this woe.
 You must forgive Fedalma all her debt:
 She is quite beggared: if she gave herself,
 'T would be a self corrupt with stifled thoughts
 Of a forsaken better. It is truth
 My father speaks: the Spanish noble's wife
 Would be a false Zincala. I will bear
 The heavy trust of my inheritance.
 See, 't was my people's life that throbbed in me;
 An unknown need stirred darkly in my soul,
 And made me restless even in my bliss.
 Oh, all my bliss was in our love; but now
 I may not taste it: some deep energy
 Compels me to choose hunger. Dear, farewell!
 I must go with my people.

[She stretched forth
Her tender hands, that oft had lain in his,
The hands he knew so well, that sight of them
Seemed like their touch. But he stood still as
death ;

Locked motionless by forces opposite :
His frustrate hopes still battled with despair ;
His will was prisoner to the double grasp
Of rage and hesitancy. All the travelled way
Behind him, he had trodden confident,
Ruling munificently in his thought
This Gypsy father. Now the father stood
Present and silent and unchangeable
As a celestial portent. Backward lay
The traversed road, the town's forsaken wall,
The risk, the daring ; all around him now
Was obstacle, save where the rising flood
Of love close pressed by anguish of denial
Was sweeping him resistless ; save where she
Gazing stretched forth her tender hands, that
hurt
Like parting kisses. Then at last he spoke.]

DON SILVA.

No, I can never take those hands in mine,
Then let them go forever !

FEDALMA.

It must be.

We may not make this world a paradise
By walking it together hand in hand,
With eyes that meeting feed a double strength.
We must be only joined by pains divine
Of spirits blent in mutual memories.
Silva, our joy is dead.

DON SILVA.

But love still lives,
 And has a safer guard in wretchedness.
 Fedalma, women know no perfect love :
 Loving the strong, they can forsake the strong ;
 Man clings because the being whom he loves
 Is weak and needs him. I can never turn
 And leave you to your difficult wandering ;
 Know that you tread the desert, bear the storm ;
 Shed tears, see terrors, faint with weariness,
 Yet live away from you. I should feel naught
 But your imagined pains : in my own steps
 See your feet bleeding, taste your silent tears,
 And feel no presence but your loneliness.
 No, I will never leave you !

ZARCA.

My lord Duke,
 I have been patient, given room for speech,
 Bent not to move my daughter by command,
 Save that of her own faithfulness. But now,
 All further words are idle elegies
 Unfitting times of action. You are here
 With the safe conduct of that trust you showed
 Coming alone to the Zincalo's camp.
 I would fain meet all trust with courtesy
 As well as honour ; but my utmost power
 Is to afford you Gypsy guard to-night
 Within the tents that keep the northward lines,
 And for the morrow, escort on your way
 Back to the Moorish bounds.

DON SILVA.

What if my words
 Were meant for deeds, decisive as a leap

Into the current? It is not my wont
 To utter hollow words, and speak resolves
 Like verses banded in a madrigal.
 I spoke in action first: I faced all risks
 To find Fedalma. Action speaks again
 When I, a Spanish noble, here declare
 That I abide with her, adopt her lot,
 Claiming alone fulfilment of her vows
 As my betrothed wife.

FEDALMA (*wresting herself from him, and standing
 opposite with a look of terror*).

Nay, Silva, nay!

You could not live so; spring from your high
 place . . .

DON SILVA.

Yes, I have said it. And you, chief, are bound
 By her strict vows, no stronger fealty
 Being left to cancel them.

ZARCA.

Strong words, my lord!

Sounds fatal as the hammer-strokes that shape
 The glowing metal: they must shape your life.
 That you will claim my daughter is to say
 That you will leave your Spanish dignities,
 Your home, your wealth, your people, to become
 A true Zincalo; share your wanderings,
 And be a match meet for my daughter's dower
 By living for her tribe; take the deep oath
 That binds you to us; rest within our camp,
 Nevermore hold command of Spanish men,
 And keep my orders. See, my lord, you lock
 A many-winding chain, — a heavy chain.

DON SILVA.

I have but one resolve : let the rest follow.
 What is my rank ? To-morrow it will be filled
 By one who eyes it like a carrion bird,
 Waiting for death. I shall be no more missed
 Than waves are missed that leaping on the rock
 Find there a bed and rest. Life's a vast sea
 That does its mighty errand without fail,
 Panting in unchanged strength though waves are
 changing.

And I have said it. She shall be my people,
 And where she gives her life I will give mine.
 She shall not live alone, nor die alone.
 I will elect my deeds, and be the liege,
 Not of my birth, but of that good alone
 I have discerned and chosen.

ZARCA.

Our poor faith

Allows not rightful choice, save of the right
 Our birth has made for us. And you, my lord,
 Can still defer your choice, for some days' space.
 I march perforce to-night ; you, if you will,
 Under Zincalo guard, can keep the heights
 With silent Time that slowly opes the scroll
 Of change inevitable ; taking no oath
 Till my accomplished task leaves me at large
 To see you keep your purpose or renounce it.

DON SILVA.

Chief, do I hear amiss, or does your speech
 Ring with a doubleness which I had held
 Most alien to you ? You would put me off,
 And cloak evasion with allowance ? No !

We will complete our pledges. I will take
That oath which binds not me alone, but you,
To join my life forever with Fedalma's.

ZARCA.

I wrangle not, — time presses. But the oath
Will leave you that same post upon the heights;
Pledged to remain there while my absence lasts.
You are agreed, my lord?

DON SILVA.

Agreed to all.

ZARCA.

Then I will give the summons to our camp.
We will adopt you as a brother now,
In the Zincalo's fashion. [*Exit ZARCA.*

(*SILVA takes FEDALMA'S hands.*)

FEDALMA.

O my lord!

I think the earth is trembling: naught is firm.
Some terror chills me with a shadowy grasp.
Am I about to wake, or do you breathe
Here in this valley? Did the outer air
Vibrate to fatal words, or did they shake
Only my dreaming soul? You a Zincalo?

DON SILVA.

Is then your love too faint to raise belief
Up to that height?

FEDALMA.

Silva, had you but said
That you would die,—that were an easy task

For you who oft have fronted death in war.
 But so to live for me,— you, used to rule,—
 You could not breathe the air my father breathes :
 His presence is subjection. Go, my lord !
 Fly, while there yet is time. Wait not to speak
 I will declare that I refused your love,—
 Would keep no vows to you . . .

DON SILVA.

It is too late.

You shall not thrust me back to seek a good
 Apart from you. And what good? Why, to face
 Your absence,— all the want that drove me forth
 To work the will of a more tyrannous friend
 Than any uncowed father. Life at least
 Gives choice of ills; forces me to defy,
 But shall not force me to a weak defiance.
 The power that threatened you, to master me,
 That scorches like a cave-hid dragon's breath,
 Sure of its victory in spite of hate,
 Is what I last will bend to,— most defy.
 Your father has a chieftain's ends, befitting
 A soldier's eye and arm : were he as strong
 As the Moors' prophet, yet the prophet too
 Had younger captains of illustrious fame
 Among the infidels. Let him command,
 For when your father speaks, I shall hear you.
 Life were no gain if you were lost to me :
 I would straight go and seek the Moorish walls,
 Challenge their bravest, and embrace swift death.
 The Glorious Mother and her pitying Son
 Are not Inquisitors, else their heaven were hell.
 Perhaps they hate their cruel worshippers,
 And let them feed on lies. I'll rather trust
 They love you and have sent me to defend you.

FEDALMA.

I made my creed so, just to suit my mood
And smooth all hardship, till my father came
And taught my soul by ruling it. Since then
I cannot weave a dreaming happy creed
Where our love's happiness is not accursed.
My father shook my soul awake. And you,—
What the Zinjala may not quit for you,
I cannot joy that you should quit for her.

DON SILVA.

Oh, Spanish men are not a petty band
Where one deserter makes a fatal breach.
Men, even nobles, are more plenteous
Than steeds and armour; and my weapons left
Will find new hands to wield them. Arrogance
Makes itself champion of mankind, and holds
God's purpose maimed for one hidalgo lost.
See where your father comes and brings a crowd
Of witnesses to hear my oath of love;
The low red sun glows on them like a fire;
This seems a valley in some strange new world,
Where we have found each other, my Fedalma.

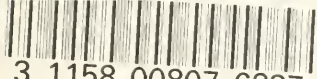
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

REC'D LD-UKI

SEP 17 1944

Handwritten signature



3 1158 00807 6837

'R
4666
A1
1901
v.1

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 364 575 1

